

A History of the Indian Settlement in Christchurch.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

N.Z.J.H.

The New Zealand Journal of History.

N.Z.I.C.A.

The New Zealand Indian Central Association.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This study is concerned with the origins and consequent settlement of the Gujarati community in New Zealand, and, in particular, in Christchurch. Gujaratis are not the only Indians who have come to live in this country. Punjabis have also settled here. However, Gujaratis have constituted approximately 90 per cent of the population of Indian descent at any one time. Although various studies<sup>1</sup> have been made of the Auckland and Wellington provinces respectively, no such specialised study has been made of the South Island. So as partially to fill this gap I have decided to undertake a study of the Christchurch Gujarati community. Secondly, I am interested in Christchurch as I was born here. Incidentally, I am of Gujarati origin. Possibly the major reason why a study for Christchurch has not been attempted is that the number of persons of Indian descent is small. In fact census figures taken of statistical areas of New Zealand from 1961 to 1969 illustrate that Christchurch runs fourth in terms of the number of people of Indian descent, behind Central Auckland, South Auckland-Bay of Plenty and Wellington. Today there are fewer than two hundred inhabitants of Gujarati origin in Christchurch.

Theses dealing with Auckland and Wellington districts have been done in the context of other disciplines; Anthropology for the Auckland study and Geography for Wellington.

1. T.G. McGee, "The Indian Community in Wellington City. A Geographical contribution to the Study of Assimilation," unpublished M.A. Geography thesis, University of Wellington, 1961.

E. Grimes, "Indians in New Zealand. The Socio-Cultural Situation of Migrants from India in the Auckland Province," unpublished M.A. Anthropology Thesis, University of Auckland, 1957.

Taher<sup>2</sup> has studied the origins and distribution of the Indian settlement in New Zealand with the other dominant Asian group, the Chinese. To date the most modern study on the subject of Indian immigration has been completed by J.V. Williams<sup>3</sup> as part of her B.A. (Hons). in history. She has dealt with migration in the context of immigration legislation. She also gives a summary of public opinion in New Zealand, regarding the arrival of migrants from India. Chronologically her study terminates at 1930. I wish to go a little further on the time scale and examine not so much the extent of immigration legislation and reactions to it as initiatives and responses taken by new migrants in their new society.

It is obligatory that a study of this kind examine motives for immigration. Thus it seems necessary to describe circumstances of potential Indian migrants to New Zealand tended to originate from two regions in India, the Punjab and the Gujarat. Reasons will be sought for the nature of migration on a regional basis. In addition, migrants to New Zealand appear to be of similar economic standing, tending to come from rural areas in India. Once migration of India has been traced an attempt shall be made to examine living conditions, livelihoods and the like in New Zealand. A brief look will be taken at the general reaction by the host society towards migrants of Indian descent. In its most extreme form this reaction is to be seen in the formation of a White New Zealand League. In reply a central organisation of Indians, made up of both Punjabis and Gujaratis, set up in 1926, the New Zealand Indian Association in Taumaranui. The aims and preoccupations of this organisation and

2. M. Taher, "The Asians", K.W. Thomson and A.D. Trlin (eds), Immigrants in New Zealand, Palmerston North, 1970.
3. J.V. Williams, "A study of the Gujarati Community in New Zealand Against the Background of Immigration Legislation to 1930," unpublished B.A. (Hons). History extended essay, University of Otago, Dunedin, 1976.

the Indian Association which grew up in Christchurch will also be examined.

Largely as a result of changes in immigration legislation and economic improvement of migrants, the composition of the New Zealand population of Indian origin has altered over the years. One feature of post World War Two New Zealand is the increasing number of New Zealand born children of Indian origin. It will be useful to look more closely at this group.

I doubt the profitability of dealing with the Christchurch community in isolation since links, either formal or informal have been established within New Zealand. By formal links it would be relevant to look at the degree of communication between the local branch, Christchurch and the New Zealand Indian Association. As well as formal links it seems necessary to take into account the degree of interchange in the fields of sport and recreation. By ignoring these informal links the importance of the central organisation and local branches may well be over-emphasised.

Sources used in this study fall into three broad categories. Firstly, an approach which might be termed quasi-anthropological has been used. I interviewed several members of the Christchurch Indian community who came to New Zealand from the 1930's to the 1950's. This is an interesting approach (a refreshing change from reading primary and secondary sources!) since oral work has a distinctive advantage which written work lacks. People have individual characteristics. Naturally, personal observations by one person may conflict with the recollection of another. Therefore, I found it advantageous to talk to people individually, though a basic set of questions was put to them. Talking to one person at a time was an advantage in another sense. At times I felt a little overawed in the presence of some persons. From these interviews I noted these people shared a common background. Interviewing these individuals seems to provide



access to the "folk history" of groups whose heritage might otherwise be lost. Unlike people who are prominent in the public eye, these migrants have not written memoirs and diaries.

It is necessary, however, to be aware of pitfalls when using this historical method. For one thing oral history, which is what I consider to be recollections of the past, can not tell the whole story. Thus other historical sources such as newspapers and photographs have not been ignored. Of course, interviewing must take into account the fact that human memory is a fallible historical source. It is susceptible to lapses, fabrications and distortions. But these factors should not lead us to deny the value of oral history. All historical sources, whether they are written or not are subject to factual error. It would seem that oral work can supplement existing written records. At this point I refer to the article written by Palakshappa<sup>4</sup>. The author mentions the closeness of the living conditions of inhabitants of Indian origin in the Waikato area. My informants helped me to imagine their conditions. Most migrants from the early twentieth century were not very well versed in English. (Indeed the reason for some coming to New Zealand was to improve their education). Speaking to and questioning people appears to be the closest thing to pure human memory.

Naturally oral sources cannot entirely give an accurate picture. Thus, a second source was looked at in connection with the topic in hand. Primary material in the form of statistical surveys carried out by the Indian and New Zealand officials was helpful together with reports of Indian Association conferences and publications put out by various bodies. A third category which I found very useful was secondary material. In this respect I looked at sources that were written in both New Zealand and India.

4. T.C. Palakshappa, "Indian Immigrants in Waikato (New Zealand): A Study in Dynamics of Situations," Working paper in the Department of Sociology, University of Waikato, Hamilton, 1973.

## CHAPTER II

### ORIGINS AND MOTIVATIONS

From the outset it ought to be pointed out that a major feature of Indian immigration to New Zealand is that migrants had their family origins in Western India. In this section it seems necessary to examine the area concerned and trace reasons for migration. A superficial geographical description is required, for even today amongst New Zealand Indians one can see manifestations of things "Indian", for example the continuation of the wearing of the Indian woman's dress, the sari. (It is worn not only on ceremonial occasions but also for everyday wear by some women of Gujarati descent). The Gujarati migrants from India came from a territory which was controlled by Indians in parts as well as British. My informants<sup>1</sup>, on being asked from what area their parents were born, answered that it was a district in a portion of the Indian state of Baroda. Baroda did not constitute one compact block of territory. On the contrary its four administrative divisions<sup>2</sup> were separated from each other by large portions of British territory such as Surat or by other Indian states. One village, Tavdi, from which several settlers came, was itself divided; one part British, the other Barodan. Each administrative division was subdivided into talukas and petatalukas. By 1921 the Baroda state was such that the divisions of Kadi, Baroda and Navsari belonged to North, Central and South Gujarat respectively. Amreli and Okhamandal together constituted one division, Kathiawad.

1. I conducted a series of interviews with several senior members of the Christchurch Indian community. They came to Christchurch as adolescents during the 1930s and 1940s. They are now in their fifties and sixties. The interviews were carried out separately in individual homes.
2. Navsari, Kadi, Amreli and Baroda. These divisions were called prants.

In 1947 at independence, the area of Surat was enlarged to take in the Princely states of Dharampur, Bansarda, Sacchin and the Navsari prant of the state of Baroda within the border of the Surat district.

Although those compiling the Indian censuses often found emigration overseas from India difficult to estimate, in the 1921 Indian census an attempt was made to estimate the number of Baroda natives resident abroad:

Table 1

Subjects residing outside India

Baroda	1921	1911
Central Gujarat	844	94
North Gujarat	387	810
South Gujarat	3802	2499
Kathiawad	377	152

Source: Census of India 1921 Vol. XVII Baroda Part 1 General Report page 105. Figures were supplied by the Political Office from the Register of Passports issued to emigrants from August 1915 to May 1921. Numerically the figures do not appear too great. But they do indicate that one division of Baroda, the Navsari area of South Gujarat, was prominent in terms of emigration. My informants were quick to point out that Navsari was the nearest town from their villages. The next logical question is to consider why the Navsari division?

Various reasons have been given. The general Gujarat area was not helped by a succession of famines and plagues from 1896. It was thought that this area was immune to famine, so, when it came, psychologically the population was not prepared adequately to meet it. So pronounced was the effect of these disasters, it has been said that much farming had become uneconomic<sup>3</sup>. Approximately twenty years later

3. D. Hardiman, "The Crisis of the Lesser Patidars: Peasant Agitations in Kheda District, Gujarat 1917-1934", D.A. Low (ed), Congress and the Raj. Facets of the Indian Struggle 1917-1947, London, 1977, p. 44.

there occurred the outbreak of influenza and near famine. Mukhtyar was prompted to assert that during a thirty year period, 1892 to 1926, "emigration has been a powerful factor in moulding the size of population."<sup>4</sup> He studied the village of Atgam in the Bulsar Taluka of Surat District. His work was carried out prior to independence so that politically the village came under British rule, unlike the Navsari division in Baroda. Geographically, however, the distance from Surat is not very far. Turning to the subject of irrigation, it would seem that Mukhtyar is generalising for the whole Gujarat when he writes that Gujarat was not provided with a system of irrigation canals<sup>5</sup>. Choksey also makes the comment that irrigation canals were not adequate for agricultural needs and reinforces his point by producing figures on rainfall<sup>6</sup>. Thus from a rainfall point of view this area of Gujarat was not regarded as ideal for agriculture. Further, the compilers of the 1931 census of India admitted that although emigrants to countries outside data could not be estimated from census data they did state that:

... the overseas items of the Baroda emigration

... (are) an important feature of Baroda migration statistics<sup>7</sup>.

However, J.B. Shukla writes that "immigration and emigration are equal in number."<sup>8</sup>

4. G.C. Mukhtyar, Life and Labour in a South Gujarat Village, Calcutta, 1930, p. 52.

5. Ibid, p. 2.

6. R.D. Choksey, Economic Life in the Bombay Gujarat 1800-1939, London, 1968, p. 52.

7. Census of India 1931, Vol. XIX, Part 1 Report, p. 36.

8. J.B. Shukla, Life and Labour in a Gujarati Taluka, Bombay, 1937, p. 44.

His study was confined to the Olpad taluka in Surat district but quite some distance from the Navsari taluka. These differences between various studies suggest that within this part of Western India, there are variations over the extent of migration. Nevertheless, emigration from the outer or coastal zones of Gujarat was more prevalent compared with those villages located in the inner zone. Choksey discusses the type of persons involved in emigration. They included Parsis, Motāla and Anavil Brahmins as well as Kharwas, Kolis and Dheds. Generally the first three were well educated according to Choksey.<sup>9</sup> The other group consisted of Kharwas who often worked as lascars on ships. Kolis were primarily agricultural in occupation. Their relationship to the land, as owners or labourers of the land, varied. Dheds were usually involved in weaving.

Economically, the general region of South Gujarat including Surat, suffered a decline during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Surat was the site of the first British factory in India. One reason for its decline was the silting of the nearby Tapti River. In addition, competition from Bombay was increasing in two ways. Bombay not only possessed a deepwater harbour but it was also the leading commercial centre in Western India. Thus, from being the focal point of British influence, the position of Surat took a plunge.

At this stage it would be appropriate to examine briefly conditions of rural life in South Gujarat since I was informed by members of the Christchurch Gujarati community that their origins were rural. If one refers to Shukla's Olpad Taluka study then one gains the impression that the pressure of population on resources in the taluka was great.

9. Choksey, op cit, p. 46.

The competition for land has increased so that tenants undertake to pay rents which they cannot afford,... some of the tenants are now groaning under the load of debt contracted to pay the rents ... there exists a pressure of population on resources in the taluka. <sup>10</sup>

Of course it could be argued that other parts of India were just as poorly off, but Shukla, writing in 1947, quotes a figure of 79 per cent of the total population being involved in the occupation of "Exploitation of Animals and Vegetables" in the taluka.<sup>11</sup> Further, 83 per cent of workers in the taluka were connected with agriculture generally. According to Shukla this percentage of the total workers was rather higher than the percentage recorded for the whole of India. It suggests possibly, the quality of soils near the coast. Unlike Pocock who paints a very lush picture of the Kheda District,<sup>12</sup> "the Garden of India", the same cannot be said for the west coast to the same degree. The soil was inclined to being salty near the coast. The types of crops grown were jowar, a large millet, rice, an important part of the diet, and wheat.

A number of points put forward by Shukla may well be applied to Indian migrants in Christchurch. He writes that man is enterprising and "more ready to leave his home where nature is unkind".<sup>13</sup> The first Gujarati migrants to Christchurch were male. Despite Shukla's contention that emigration and immigration were equal in number, he points out that the area from which the "enterprising" male originated was the western zone of Gujarat, especially coastal villages. Here is

10. Shukla, op cit, p. 74.

11. Ibid, p. 63.

12. David Pocock, Kanbi and Patidar. A Study of the Patidar Community of Gujarat, Oxford, 1972, p. 6.

13. Mukhtyar, op cit, p. 48.

possibly a link between the quality of soils for agriculture and the prominence of the western zone of Gujarat liable to emigrate. It can, therefore, be suggested that the occupation of agriculture was affected by the quality of soils. A glance at the map reveals that the majority of inhabitants to Christchurch were from the western zone.<sup>14</sup> In addition, although emigration figures are not available for particular villages up to the middle of the twentieth century Shukla mentions one economic group from which agricultural labour was drawn, the Kolis. Kolis were also involved in migration.

It is difficult to come to terms with the definition of "Kolis". M. Taher<sup>15</sup> mentions, without giving the source of his figures, that Gujarati migrants to New Zealand are made up of Kanabis (sic) and Kolis. Kolis as described by Shah, form one quarter of the total population of Gujarat. Official chronicles during the period of Muslim rule in Gujarat included Kolis as thieves and pirates. Shah suggests that despite this unfavourable description, the Kolis' activities were proof of their ambition to claim themselves members of the Kshatriya or warrior varna.<sup>16</sup> A current description terms Kolis as "a caste of small farmers in the plain of South Gujarat, along the coast".<sup>17</sup> Shah has added another attribute for Kolis, namely, "unskilled in agriculture".<sup>18</sup> It would be difficult to measure

14. See map. The villages: Matwad, Bodali, Tavdi, Karadi.

15. M. Taher, "The Asians", K.W. Thomson and A.D. Trlin (eds), Immigrants to New Zealand, Palmerston North, 1970, p. 43.

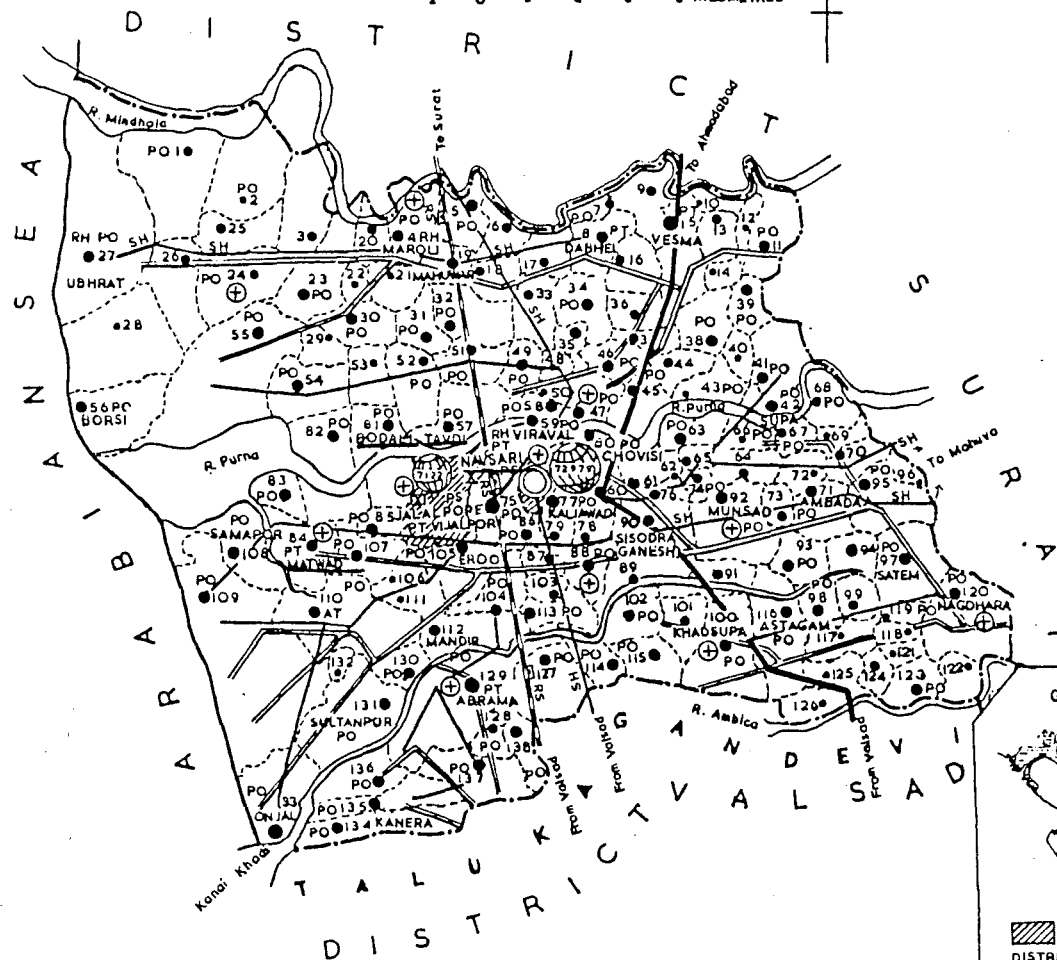
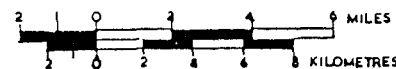
16. A.M. Shah, "Political System in Eighteenth Century Gujarat", Enquiry, Vol 1, No. 1, 1964, pp. 83-95.

17. J. Breman Patronage and Exploitation - Changing Agrarian Relations in South Gujarat, India, Berkeley, 1974, p. 262.

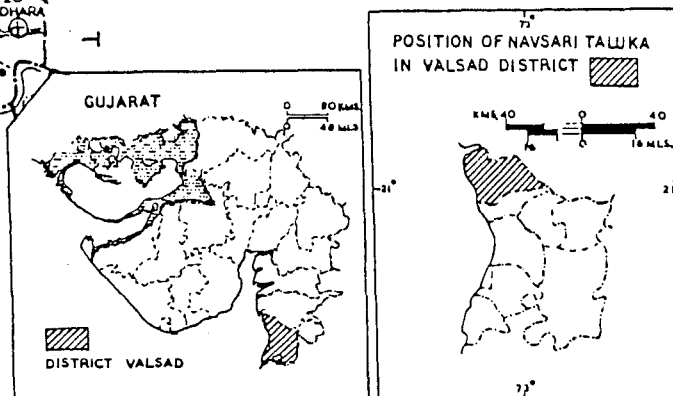
18. Shah, op cit, p. 84.

# GUJARAT TALUKA NAVSARI

DISTRICT VALSAD



- DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
- TALUKA BOUNDARY
- TALUKA HEADQUARTERS
- VILLAGE BOUNDARY
- NATIONAL HIGHWAY
- STATE HIGHWAY
- METALLED ROAD
- UNMETALLED ROAD
- RIVERS & STREAMS
- TANKS NATURAL OR ARTIFICIAL
- RESERVOIRS, BUNDS/EMBANKMENTS/  
CANALS WITH DISTRIBUTARIES & LOCK
- TOWNS
- VILLAGES
- UNINHABITED VILLAGES
- POST/TELEGRAPH OFFICE
- POLICE STATION
- REST HOUSE/TRAVELLERS BUNGALOW
- RAILWAYS WITH STATIONS
- BROAD GAUGE
- METRE GAUGE
- NARROW GAUGE
- HOSPITALS/PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRES/  
DISPENSARIES/CHILD & MATERNITY  
WELFARE CENTRES
- URBAN AREA



NOTE: JALALPORE L.CHO. II IS PARTLY INCLUDED IN NAVSARI TOWN AREA

Source: Census of India, 1971. District Census Handbook. Village and Townwise Primary Abstract, District Valsad.



skill or lack of it. At this stage it would not be profitable to become embroiled in an argument over whether Kolis, as a community, were trying to achieve Kshatriya status in the twentieth century. There seems little doubt that Kolis were an upwardly mobile group in this latter period especially since they were described as thieves and pirates in the Muslim period. They appear to have risen to the more respectable occupation of small farmers.

If the pressure of population on the land was so great as Shukla contends then migration ought to be an outlet. In this context, Shukla mentions in passing that, "a few coastal Kolis sometimes emigrate to Rangoon and Africa".<sup>19</sup> New Zealand was not mentioned. By African emigration, Shukla was most probably referring to migration to East Africa which took place during the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century to work on railway construction works. Those Gujaratis who came to New Zealand were from a group involved in agriculture and sometimes artisanship. In order to finance their passage to New Zealand it would seem that the majority of migrants must have owned sufficient land. Whether in fact they intended to buy additional land was difficult to perceive. Nevertheless Kolis were the economic group from which the ancestors of the current Christchurch community were drawn. My interviews did not produce descendents from artisan groups such as some in Wellington and Auckland. One male Gujarati-speaking Muslim also migrated to Christchurch.

Desai suggests another reason why not so many economically wealthy communities immigrated.

In Gujarat there is still a general injunction against travelling across the sea since it involves abandonment of the rules of ritual purity, particularly that concerning commensality. A hundred years ago, travel abroad entailed outcasting, especially if the traveller were a Brahman.<sup>20</sup>

19. Shukla, op cit, p. 48.

20. R. Desai, Indian Immigrants to Britain London, 1963, p. 93.

This last point would seem to be minor compared with other reasons. It could be said that migration by an agricultural group, Kolis, to New Zealand was for purely economic reasons. New Zealand was the place where money was to be made so that the existing home and land, if any, could be improved. But if one goes by what M.B. Desai wrote then emigration was not such a large force.

Looking to the size of the rural population of Gujarat, however it should be said that emigratory and migratory movements to foreign lands, Bombay and within the region itself are not large.<sup>21</sup>

Desai's book was published in 1948. Perhaps there is here an indication that a change in emigration had taken place since the time 1931 Census of India was compiled. The writers felt that emigration was very high in the Baroda state.<sup>22</sup>

It seems necessary to turn to the type of village situation from which migrants to New Zealand came. Socially the centre of the village in Gujarat was the joint family. The joint family revolved around the authority of the senior male. This type of authority was considered to be the ideal family type in Gujarat.<sup>23</sup> To put it a little more sociologically it was the patrilineal extended family which lived in a household under the management of a senior male. This type of situation was advantageous for agriculture, in the sense that all members of the family could work the land, thus lessening the need to hire labour. The joint family was also appropriate for migration in that early migration to New Zealand was undertaken by males. The dependents of these migrants could be left in the care of the joint family. Therefore, the joint family offered security for the dependents, the wife and children under the migrant father's leadership. Furthermore it fostered unity amongst various generations. Of course this type of family situation also had its disadvantages.

21. M.B. Desai, The Rural Economy of Gujarat, Bombay, 1948, p. 19.

22. Census of India 1931, Vol XIX, Part 1 Report, p. 36

23. H.S. Morris, The Indians in Uganda, London, 1968, pp. 124-125.

The older generation, for example, could well have greater influence over its grandchildren compared with the parents of the children. During the second stage of emigration to New Zealand, the 1930s and 1940s, it would seem the joint family came into its own. A number of males who came to Christchurch during the middle decades of this century were married. It was more than likely that their wives went to live with their husband's family. The joint family consisted of several levels, generally according to age. The first level was composed of the senior male and his wife. It may be appropriate to label this generation of migrants to New Zealand, as First Generation Indian Emigrants. The second level, in this family organisation consisted of the first generation's married sons, their wives and children, the first generation's unmarried sons and unmarried daughters. Married daughters and sisters were added to the lineage of their husband's.<sup>24</sup> In this connection Christchurch seems to have provided some good examples of "chain migration". "Chain migration" may be taken to mean migration which is the result of one generation, usually the senior generation, sponsoring a person from the same generation or a son or nephew from a younger generation. Later this subject will be dealt with.

It was noted in the introduction that Indian migrants to New Zealand came from two regions in India, the Punjab and the Gujarat. Migrants to Christchurch were largely Gujarati and their origins were rural.

24. See Appendix for lineages of some families in the Christchurch Gujarati community.

### CHAPTER III

#### ONCE IN NEW ZEALAND.

According to a letter written by the New Zealand Indian Association to the Overseas Department of the Indian National Congress, the first Indians to New Zealand arrived in 1902.<sup>1</sup> A study of the Punjabi community in New Zealand by W.H. McLeod puts the arrival of the first Punjabis in New Zealand around 1890.<sup>2</sup> It proved even more difficult to ascertain the arrival of the first Indian to Christchurch. One old homestead in Christchurch whose owner was a former British Officer in the Indian Army, Sir John Cracroft Wilson was believed to have brought out thirteen Indian Servants with him in 1854.<sup>3</sup> All that could be gleaned about the fate of these servants was that a number of them left the homestead and married Maoris. The last of them was believed to have died during May 1902 at the age of 107 years.<sup>4</sup> These servants, however, did not actually constitute a lasting society.

Those Indians in Christchurch with Gujarati origins appeared to be part of a trend. For them, migration as for other Indian migrants to New Zealand was not influenced by a particular programme such as indentured labour to Fiji and South Africa during the late nineteenth century. It seems migrants to New Zealand displayed similar tendencies as those migrants to East Africa.

1. Letter 16.8.39 from the New Zealand Indian Association to the Overseas Department of the Indian National Congress in response to a questionnaire sent out by the latter.
2. W.H. McLeod, "Punjabis in New Zealand", Newsletter of the New Zealand Asian Studies Society Incorporated No. 4, December 1977, p. 6.
3. George Macdonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies.
4. Ibid.

The emigration to East Africa ... was a spontaneous one ... the poorest classes did not migrate, nor for different reasons did the rich or well-educated. In addition only those living reasonably close to convenient ports were likely to make the journey.<sup>5</sup>

One gained the impression in Christchurch that migrants here came from families particularly inclined towards migration. Several Christchurch Indians have relations in South Africa and East Africa including Kenya, Uganda and Rhodesia. Morris, in his study of Indians in Uganda, does not mention the term "Koli" but "Patidar", a group whose origins are believed to have been from the Kunbi group. Kunbis, like Kolis, were involved in agriculture. It would seem that the absence of Patidar descent is due to the fact that Gujarati migrants to Christchurch came from a small area not known to be heavily populated with Patidars. Thus, Kolis have been considered to be the "largest caste of South Gujarat".<sup>6</sup> Shah who wrote in 1964 described Kolis as the "most widespread and largest single ethnic group."<sup>7</sup> Patidars, on the other hand were believed to inhabit the area between Ahmedabad and Cambay.<sup>8</sup> These towns are located north compared with the area from which my informants originated.

Indians in Christchurch did not consider settling permanently. Thus, my informants agreed that during the early stages of migration, they displayed behaviour that was common to Chinese in New Zealand.

... like the Chinese, who arrived in the goldfields of Otago were like their fellow miners, an essentially male society. Theirs ... was to be an essentially temporary stay before returning to China.<sup>9</sup>

5. H.S. Morris, The Indians in Uganda, London, 1968, p. 9.
6. J. Breman, Patronage and Exploitation - Changing Agrarian Relations in South Gujarat, India, Berkeley, 1974, p. 167
7. A.M. Shah, "Political System in Eighteenth Century Gujarat," Enquiry, Vol 1 No. 1, 1964, p. 85.
8. David Pocock, Mind, Body and Wealth - A Study of Belief and Practice in an Indian Village, Oxford, 1973, p. 2.
9. S.S. Racchagan, "Asian Immigration to New Zealand," unpublished M.A. Geography Thesis, University of Otago, Dunedin, 1972, p. 25.

Whereas those servants of Indian descent under the services of Cracroft Wilson could hardly be termed a community, it would seem male Indian migrants to Christchurch displayed a little more solidarity. At this point it seems necessary to come to an adequate explanation of a "community" since various Christchurch Indians refer to people of origins similar to them as a "community". "Community" could be interpreted as a group of people living together in a particular region, not necessarily living side by side but linked by similar language, religion and customs, and to some extent sharing a common lifestyle, including similar occupations.

One of my informants, currently an elderly member of the Christchurch Indian community named the first residents of Gujarati origin, Jaga Ranchhod and Chhibha Bangiya. Others to follow were Chhibha Vallabh, Bhana Govind, Gopal Lakhu, and Budhia Manga.

By 1920, these six named were in Christchurch, exhibiting similar trends to those mentioned by Morris. They were males, who came from areas not far from the coast.<sup>10</sup> Although the length of their stay differed considerably, they were in New Zealand for periods up to ten years or more, according to some of their descendents whom I interviewed. The majority of these early migrants were married. None of their wives migrated with them during the early stage. In fact the wives never came to New Zealand at all despite provisions in New Zealand immigration legislation. Thus male migration possibly suggests that the stay in Christchurch was not considered to be permanent. The mode of transport by migrants to New Zealand was by ship, normally from Bombay. Generally the shipping line called into Sydney. Before arriving in New Zealand a few of them went to Fiji. However, this subject is very confusing. One informant whose father

10. See map.

had stopped in transit in Fiji was adamant that his father did not come as an indentured labourer working in Fiji.

I was informed that occupations carried out by these early migrants to Christchurch were general labouring, bricklaying and the like. Possible some of them took to bricklaying due to the fact that brickmaking was known to have been carried out in western India.<sup>11</sup> It seemed that labouring was a temporary occupation for it was followed by bottle dealing. During early of this occupation I was informed that bottle dealing was carried out with a handcart. Later when earnings increased, a horse and cart were obtained.<sup>12</sup>

11. J. Breman, op cit, pp. 102-104. The work done by Jan Breman studied a region of South Gujarat, South of Navsari. For one village, Chikhligam, it was not uncommon for some agricultural labourers, Dublas and Dhodias to migrate on a seasonal basis to brickyards near Bombay. Most migrants would depart in Mid-November and return about the end of May. Whether this seasonal migration to Bombay applied to Christchurch migrants was difficult to ascertain. Nevertheless a few migrants did work in bricklaying suggesting that they may have had experience in brickmaking.
12. Occupations such as bottle dealing came under the 1920 Health Act. Bottle dealing was an offensive trade according to the Act. Other occupations included fish cleaning and curing, manure works, chemical works and wood pulp. Sections 54 and 55 placed restrictions on carrying out an offensive trade. "No persons shall establish any offensive trade within the district of any local authority, or erect or extend any premises for the purposes of or in connection with any offensive trade." p. 37. Health Act of 1956. According to the District Health Officer, Christchurch City Council, Mr. Thompson, the provisions laid down in the 1956 Act differ little to provisions of the 1920 Health Act.

Licences for the collection and storage of bottles were issued by the Christchurch City Council with the approval of the City Health Inspector. Unfortunately I was unable to obtain evidence of the workings of the Act in Christchurch so far as applications for bottle dealing are concerned, as there was a purge of City Council records during the early 1970s.<sup>13</sup> In connection with bottle collection, bottle dealers of Indian descent in Wellington were forced to wear armbands under the terms of a by-law passed by the Wellington City Council.<sup>14</sup> The senior member of the current Gujarati community was adamant that no such distinction was made in Christchurch.

Another of my informants told me that his father did not come direct to Christchurch. Rather he worked in the King Country, clearing forest.<sup>15</sup> With regard to labouring, one of the few newspaper articles referring to Christchurch Indians noted an incident which took place in 1920. According to the article five Indian workers who had previously been working on railway construction works in the North Island, arranged with the Public Works Department to take up a contract on the construction of the Evans Pass Road.<sup>16</sup>

13. I did obtain a copy of a licence for bottle collection and storage that was issued in September 1967. According to the Chief City Health Inspector, Mr. Thompson, conditions for issuing these such licences have not changed radically over the years.

14. Wellington Indian Association Incorporated Golden Jubilee 1926-1976 booklet.

15. See J.H. Broomfield, "C.F. Andrews in New Zealand", N.Z.J.H., April 1973, pp. 70-75. Andrews was a clergyman. He went to India in 1904 as a missionary and was shocked by discrimination practised by the British in Delhi. In 1915 he came to New Zealand and visited a group of Indians clearing bush in the King Country.

16. Press 3 July 1920, p. 8.



Reaction from other workers was far from favourable and resulted in strike action. This report is interesting. Not only did some sections of the work force believe that non-western people were a threat to their livelihood, since it was believed they worked for below average wage rates, but also the feeling of racial tension that had arisen out of this belief. Thus, the report noted

a strong undercurrent of feeling throughout New Zealand against what is termed "the Asiatic Invasion".<sup>17</sup>

It is ironic, therefore, that those Indian workers had been paid above average rates.

... the paysheets show that the five Hindus objected to by the workers at Evans Pass earned in their last contract more than the average which was 13s a day and is now 14s.8d.<sup>18</sup>

According to the article, this type of incident involving Indian workers leading to strike action was an isolated case in the general Christchurch area.

During the last three or four years a small party of Hindus have been working on departmental road works at the Conway, and no trouble over their engagement has been experienced.<sup>19</sup>

Another significant point resulting from this article is the terminology. "Hindu" seems to be quite conveniently interchanged with "Indian". Thus, for this part of New Zealand at least, no distinction was made between Hindus, Muslims, Punjabis or Gujaratis. (One early settler to Christchurch from Gujarat was a Muslim, Mohammed Kara). The fact that a group of five Indians worked together in a gang was interpreted as a monopoly of a particular occupation such as labouring, lacking prestige. In addition, these migrants originated from an area of India which was common to them all.<sup>20</sup>

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. See map.

The same could be said for the occupation of bottle collection and storage. It was perhaps inevitable that they should remain in contact with one another after reaching Christchurch. Their occupations were similar in Christchurch. They had had little knowledge of the English language and, nominally at least, shared the one religion, Hinduism. It is little wonder that they remained in touch in a new society. Taher describes this sort of lifestyle as, "an in-group oriented behaviour pattern of the new immigrants".<sup>21</sup> Perhaps another reason for the unfavourable outlook towards Indian migrants by the general New Zealand population was that, together with the Chinese, Indians did not desire permanent New Zealand residence. My informants were quick to point out that their fathers' decision to come to New Zealand was for purely practical reasons. A reason for this temporary stay could be that all of these males had been born in India and had spent all their adolescence and some of their adult life in India. Furthermore, the majority were married. To some extent some of the literature published by various anti-migrant societies was correct when it was stated migrants were of a temporary nature, taking advantage of the privileges offered in New Zealand, while at the same time not taking the responsibilities.

The immunity of these aliens from such burdens as heavy rates and military training, and the loss sustained by the country...<sup>22</sup>

In this case "aliens" were essentially Asian: Chinese and Indian. In actual fact two New Zealand Indians were believed to have served during the First World War.<sup>23</sup> Whether it was in the Indian Army, the British Army or New Zealand Army is difficult to discover. One

21. M. Taher, "The Asians", K.W. Thomson and A.D. Trlin (eds), Immigrants in New Zealand Palmerston North, 1970, p. 43.

22. Auckland Star 23 January 1926. Leading article. Cited from a file compiled by Mr. Charles Sedgewick, Department of Sociology, Canterbury University.

23. J.H. Broomfield, op cit, p. 71.

informant claimed that two Indians were able to come into New Zealand because of their war service. If my informant is correct in believing that the two participants were Gujarāṭi, then it was contrary to the practice in Gujarat. It could be said that generally Sikhs were more likely to be involved in the army rather than other regional groups. Nevertheless, these two Gujaratis had acquired possibly the taste of a new environment before coming to New Zealand. There is also the possibility that these people were attempting to assert their Kshatriya heritage, mentioned in the earlier chapter.

I have already noted that my informants in a sense endorsed the view expressed by some sections of New Zealand public opinion that early migrants from India did not intend to reside permanently in New Zealand. That is not surprising since as breadwinners they had dependents in Gujarat.

There is very little information on the condition of Indians residing in New Zealand apart from comments made by C.F. Andrews<sup>24</sup> and a report from Srinivasa Sastri, a representative of the government of India who was authorised to travel to Australia, New Zealand and Canada to look into the conditions of Indians. With regard to New Zealand he wrote:

The resident Indians in the Dominion of New Zealand number between 500 and 600 ... the majority of Indians have not been long in the country and have yet to find their feed. Casual labour at a time when there is a general economic depression is a precarious source of livelihood ... some of them as have farms of their own are quite well to do ...<sup>25</sup>

Admittedly Sastri's comments are somewhat vague although he observed that many took to labouring as an occupation. At this stage they were by no means permanent residents.

24. Ibid.

25. Quoted from S. Sastri's Report in the Census of India 1921, Vol 1, Part 1 Report, p. 99.

The six men mentioned at the beginning of the Chapter could well be termed the first generation Indians in Christchurch. It was this group who were the first to come from Gujarat. This generation formed the nucleus of the current Gujarati community in Christchurch. The second generation of Indians in Christchurch could be regarded as those people born in India but spending much of their adolescence and later, their adult life in Christchurch. This latter group brought out their wives and their children, if there were any. The major difference between the first and second generations apart from age, is that the second generation brought a sense of stability to the Gujarati population in Christchurch. It was the second generation which decided to stay permanently in New Zealand.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT GENERATIONS

What I have termed the second generation of Indians made the decision whether to remain in New Zealand or not. In this section I wish to deal with migrants who came to New Zealand under the sponsorship of their fathers, already resident in New Zealand. It would also be appropriate to look at their reasons for coming at a time when migration was of a temporary nature. In addition, there is the need to explore types of work undertaken and education received by this second generation in Christchurch.

The surviving members of the Christchurch Gujarati community now in their fifties and sixties came to New Zealand as a direct result of their fathers "calling" for them from India. The trend of male migration, therefore, continued. A major reason females did not generally migrate was that during the early quarter of the twentieth century assimilation with other ethnic groups was not strong amongst new migrants. There was little likelihood of finding an Indian husband who was not related to the female. Furthermore, if migration to New Zealand followed early patterns then the chances of females migrating were slim. For one thing, it would have been difficult for females to become involved in the type of occupations males undertook in Christchurch. My male informants recalled that their fathers called for them because it was believed that the younger generation would receive an allround education. The majority of the second generation of migrants to Christchurch arrived between the ages of twelve and sixteen.

The arrival of younger males was partly as a result of the 1920 Immigration Restriction Act. Those males who had come to New Zealand under previous conditions laid down by immigration legislation, in which a language test was conducted, were able to sponsor their sons

to New Zealand. It was little wonder that Indians from other parts of India, from this time, were effectively excluded from coming to New Zealand. Because Indian migration to New Zealand before 1920 was mainly that of Gujarati and to a lesser extent, Punjabi, this regional form of migration continued.

The Act of 1920 largely came about through agitation resulting from the Returned Servicemen's Association and Trade Unions who took the view that capitalists were recruiting cheap labour and, therefore, lowering the real wages of New Zealand workers.<sup>1</sup> The Act's main provision allowed for the free entry of all people of exclusively British birth and descent, but left to the discretion of the Minister of Customs to allow or disallow the entry of those of any other origin. Needless to add, Indians and Chinese were placed in the latter category. After 1921 it became possible for the wives and minor children of those Indians who were New Zealand citizens to enter New Zealand. Further, since 1926 this provision had been granted to fiancés of New Zealand born Indians and Chinese. This extension indicates an official New Zealand view that assimilation by these two ethnic groups was not feasible due to the fact that they had made a relatively recent appearance into New Zealand. The Act also made entry permits necessary. But fathers could send permits to their sons.

Therefore, as well as the first generation of migrants, who were born in and spent their youth in India, there was now a new, younger group who had also been born in the same place as their parents. Unlike their fathers, however, they spent the later stages of their adolescence in New Zealand. The ostensible object of sponsoring their sons was to further the latter's education. It was quickly realised, though, that since these boys lacked an adequate grounding

1. W.T. Roy, "Immigration Policy, and Legislation", K.W. Thomson and A.D. Trlin, (eds), Immigrants in New Zealand, Palmerston North, 1970, p. 19.

in English, they were bound to have difficulties in Christchurch primary schools. One senior informant wryly recalled that he was educated to standard four at the age of nineteen years!

Leisure time activities of this second generation were confined largely to playing hockey in winter. My informants made the point that there was little time for leisure activities. None of them participated in, say, musical activities. For most persons the 1930s were an austere period. It should be borne in mind that the first generation and some of the second generation had families in India. It was necessary to remit some payment to them. On asking where they lived, I was told that apart from one father and son, the remainder lived in houses now in the industrial heart of Christchurch city, Southwark and Allen Streets. The streets were bounded by that area of Christchurch near the Railway Station located on Moorhouse Avenue, and Ferry Road.

During the time migrants resided in Christchurch, both generations were known to make trips to India. This type of contact was one of the several links established between the Indian migrant in New Zealand and his family in India. While the Second World War was being fought, only two males remained in Christchurch, according to one informant. Both were second generation males.

See Table 2.

Table 2

Christchurch Urban Area

Census Year		Indians	
		Males	Females
1936	F.B.	35	3
	M.B.	12	23
1945	F.B.	29	28
	M.B.	15	8
1951	F.B.	42	8
	M.B.	15	19

F.B. = full blood

M.B. = mixed blood

Source: Census of New Zealand: Population of Ethnic groups - Urban Areas 1936-1951.

The remainder had returned to India before the outbreak of war. When asked why so many went back to India there were two responses. One was that many visited their family resident in India. Another response was that, in the case of the second generation of migrants, they had gone to marry. In this way migrants in New Zealand were able to know what was happening in their respective villages. Another reason for a return to India, not mentioned by my informants, could well be due to the difficulties of remitting money from New Zealand during the war and immediately after.

On the subject of participation in the Indian national movement I was told by several of my informants to ask one of their peers. That member produced a translation from a Gujarati publication, Pratap, which told of his being picked up by the police for being involved in helping a person who was active in the movement.<sup>2</sup> That active person was known to be a resident of New Zealand which may suggest something about the type of leadership of the national movement at the local level. It would be very interesting to investigate this point further.

The Second World War could be regarded as "the turning point" in Christchurch Indian history. During the war, the community of Indians in Christchurch all but faded out. However, after the war the majority of second generation migrants returned. They were still predominantly male. It was at this time that the decision to remain permanently in Christchurch was made. No doubt those who returned to India during the war weighed out disadvantages and advantages of living in either an Indian rural setting or a Christchurch environment. A number of my informants intended to return to New Zealand but claimed it was difficult due to wartime dislocations in commun-

2. See illustration on next page. One female informant recalls that the Swadhesi movement was supported by an overwhelming majority inhabitants in the village of Bodali.





ications between India and New Zealand.

The arrival of wives and children of the second generation migrants a number of years after the war reinforces the point that my informants intended to reside permanently in Christchurch. There was, thus, the move made towards narrowing the gap in numbers between males and females.<sup>3</sup> The appearance of this group, who were overwhelmingly dependents of the second generation, was due to the provisions of the 1920 Immigration Restriction Act. That Act only allowed for the entry of wives and children of New Zealand citizens. Another point relating to the arrival of dependents which was raised by my informants was that the late 1940s were a time when the second generation of migrants came to be placed a little more comfortably compared with earlier. Hence the arrival of dependents.<sup>4</sup>

1949 B.M.'s second son's wife and one grandson	2
C.B.'s two grandsons	2
M.K.'s grandson	1
1950 C.V.'s son's wife and one grandson	2
1952 G.L.'s third son	1
G.L.'s two grandsons. The two boys, sons of G.L.'s oldest son.	2
1953 G.L.'s first son's wife	1
G.L.'s second son's wife and three grandchildren	4
1954 B.G.'s son's wife and four grandchildren	5
C.B.'s son's wife and two grandchildren	3
1956 B.M.'s first son's wife and four grandchildren	5
G.L.'s third son's wife and one grand-daughter.	2

3. See Table 2.

4. This information was gathered by asking informants when their wives and children arrived, together with years of arrival of their brothers' families. Initials stand for the first generation of migrants.

At this point it would be appropriate to look into the matter of occupations undertaken by this second generation. My informants pointed out that at an early age, they began to help their father's in bottle dealing. In the earlier section it was mentioned that bottle collecting was done by a handcart. Later, it was followed by a horse and cart. In the period when the second generation became involved in bottle dealing independent of their fathers, a change was made to trucks. In addition to bottle collecting there now came the appearance of migrants into the grocery business - a relatively late move compared with the situation in Auckland. Grimes in his Auckland study points out the preponderance of Indians in the retail business, particularly the grocery and green-grocery lines.<sup>5</sup>

Table 3

Principal Industries of Male Indians in New Zealand 1951

agriculture and livestock production	267
manufacture of food	24
manufacture of textiles	29
manufacture of wood and cork	26
manufacture of electrical machinery, apparatus and supplies	26
manufacture of transport equipment	53
construction	21
wholesale and retail trade	301
transport	103
government services	23
personal services	61
others	<u>127</u>
	1061

Source: Census of New Zealand 1951, p. 128.

Official statistics taken in the 1945 census revealed that of the foreign born only Indians took to bottle collection and storage.<sup>6</sup> Grimes in his Auckland study does not dwell on the occupation of bottle collection and storage as a principal occupation undertaken

5. See Table 3.  
6. See Table 4.

by migrants of Indian origin.

Table 4

Race Aliens: Occupation Groups and Principal Jobs

Males	Chinese	Syrian	Indian	Fijian	Samoa
scrapmetal and bottle dealer.	-	-	34	-	-
bottle gatherer.	-	-	15	-	-

Source: Census of New Zealand 1945, p. 27.

In the Wellington Indian Association Jubilee booklet 1976, a comment was made on bottle collectors being forced to wear sleeve straps. Unfortunately that booklet did not state the number of Indians involved in bottle collection. An article carried in a local week-end Christchurch newspaper in 1967 quoted an Indian bottle collector as saying that in 1948 there were approximately twenty collectors known to him, with the possibility of one or two non-Indian collectors.<sup>7</sup> What would have been ideal in the census material is a breakdown of occupations by ethnic groups on a regional basis in New Zealand.

Why did the majority of male Indians take to bottle collection in Christchurch? There was little doubt that migrants were not educated to a very high standard in their villages in Gujarat. Nor did they possess any technical training or experience in particular crafts which would be applicable to the New Zealand situation. Thus it seemed logical to follow their fathers into a business, requiring little initial capital. The bottles, as one informant described to me, were often stored at the rear of their sections. When I asked if objections were raised by neighbours I was told that generally neighbours did not mind. In the same article quoted above, it is noted that of the twenty or so bottle collectors of Indian descent in 1948, only three were left in business in 1967.<sup>8</sup> One

7. Christchurch Star Sports 23 September 1967.

8. Ibid.

reason given for the reduction in numbers was the unprofitability of such an occupation. The person interviewed in the article claimed, "We are not paid enough for the bottles ... It's not worth it."<sup>9</sup> The next question which ought to be answered is where did the remainder of Indians go?

The change in occupation of the second generation migrants could be explained with their dependents in mind, particularly their Indian born sons. As far as the first generation is concerned, by the 1950s, many of them had either left for India or died in New Zealand. (A current member of the Christchurch Gujarati community continued as a bottle dealer up to his retirement in early 1976. He was the exception). He informed me that his father had died in Christchurch. Others informed me that their fathers left for India during the period before the outbreak of the Second World War. One returned, however, with his son in 1967 and died in Christchurch seven years later. The first generation of Indian migrants could, therefore, be classed as transients. This older generation, having worked as labourers and the like, took to self-managing businesses such as bottle collecting, cleaning and storage. Similarly, as their sons arrived in Christchurch, they too became involved in the same occupations, often joining their fathers. During the 1950s and 1960s a change occurred in the types of occupation undertaken by second generation migrants. A move was made towards other self-managing occupations such as greengrocery and grocery retailing.<sup>10</sup>

9. Ibid.

10. This type of partnership may also suggest an attitude towards migrant's host society as well as migrants feeling that the success of a retail business is assured by working long hours. It could be that, initially, migrants were a little uneasy working in occupations involving other ethnic groups. This is pure speculation. Nevertheless it is worth considering.

It is interesting to observe that the trend of father-son partnership has continued as Indians have moved into retailing. This type of partnership between the generations was also to a large extent, a continuation of the joint lifestyle practised in the Gujarati village including working on the family land. Further, the sons involved in these businesses were born and brought up in India to about the age of ten years. They were given the equivalent of a primary school education in India.

All of those boys who arrived in 1949 up to 1956, however, also attended Christchurch primary schools; Waltham and Phillipstown Schools. These schools are located in what may be called semi-industrial sections of Christchurch. A number of these third generation migrants also attended Christchurch Technical College while one of them attended Linwood High School. The latter was opened in 1954. It was attended by approximately twenty children of Indian descent between 1958 and 1972. That total out-numbered those children of Indian descent attending other Christchurch secondary schools. The main reason for such a comparatively large number of Indians attending Linwood is the single one of locality: Linwood High School was comparatively close to the homes of many members of the Indian community.

The majority of those children who had been born in India and educated to primary school by the time they reached their teens did not receive an advanced academic education as compared with those children born in New Zealand to Indian parents.

A study of magazines published by Linwood High School between 1957 and 1978 reveals a number of interesting points. Until the end of the 1950s, of the three Indians who attended the school, one remained to attempt the School Certificate Examination. During this period, the males, according to the magazines, participated in competitive hockey and cricket.

(In a later section I hope to find some reasons for hockey playing such a prominent role in New Zealand Indian life). By 1960 another male had joined and continued the trend of playing both sports. His brother joined two years later and also took to hockey and cricket. During the beginning of the 1960s it was apparent that girls who attended remained at school until the end of their fourth form year. Up to this point all those children of Gujarati descent attending the school had been born in India. The middle 1960s saw the beginnings of New Zealand born Gujarati children attending. The latter group together with two males who had spent their infancy in India stayed longer at school. A majority of them gained qualifications up to University Entrance and higher.<sup>11</sup>

Thus a difference was detected between those children whose birth took place in India and those children whose origins were in Christchurch. Generally, the latter group did not become involved in retailing under the guidance of their fathers. A refreshing feature was a greater number of female students staying longer at school. Between 1968 and 1973 six girls obtained School Certificate and University Entrance.<sup>12</sup> The greater length of stay of Indians at secondary school has indicated a number of trends. In the first place there was an increasing awareness by the general population, including people of Indian descent, of the uses of further education; the greater the number of qualifications the greater choices of occupations available. The wealth of the local community has almost certainly expanded so that it was not imperative for children to contribute to family revenue as was possibly the case with second generation migrants.

11. See Kimihia, Linwood High School Magazine 1965 to 1974, particularly those sections printing results of School Certificate and other examinations.

12. Ibid.

The 1960s and 1970s continued the quite prominent role taken by Indian males in hockey and cricket at Linwood. Both sports reached a high standard for the school especially during the late 1960s. One Indian who was quite outstanding at cricket and hockey received recognition in an article in the school magazine.<sup>13</sup> A glance through previous magazines illustrated it was rare for an individual to gain so much space in the one magazine.

Although a number of students of Indian descent gained recognition for sports I did not come across parent involvement in such associations as the Parent Teacher organisation. This non-involvement may indicate apathy while at the same time Indian parents feeling a little self-conscious bearing in mind their lack of a formal western education. Another interesting omission of those of Indian descent during the 1950s to the 1970s, a twenty year stretch, was that Indians were not found to be participating in "cultural activities", for instance, music and drama. One reason may have been the fact that parents of New Zealand born Indian children were either not aware of cultural activities or were not interested. Thus, their children were not encouraged to take up non-sporting activities. As mentioned before, the majority of fathers of these New Zealand born Indian children had played hockey in their youth. No doubt the fathers were pleased their sons had taken so quickly to sports. Drama was possibly too unfamiliar for the second generation of migrants to grasp since the majority of this group possessed such a scanty knowledge of the English language. Such attitudes to "cultural" pursuits were understandable amongst persons who had spent their childhood in India.

A study of magazines published by Linwood High School has elicited some interesting information. Indians did not take a distinctive part in music, drama and other non-sporting activities. In the case

13. Kimihia, Linwood High School Magazine 1968, p. 58.



of male pupils, two sports, cricket and hockey were played.

Other sports, rugby, soccer and tennis did not figure so well.

As far as female students were concerned, one or two took part in netball and one in competitive softball. Surprisingly enough only two girls took to hockey on a competitive level.

New Zealand born children of second generation Indian migrants have not been confined to such a narrow occupational group as their Indian born peers. This is to be expected since the younger group has been brought up in the New Zealand education system. Yet at the same time this group has had to converse in Gujarati with their parents and their parents' Gujarati friends. Occupations for the younger group range from clerical work to engineering and law. By choice a number has turned to managing grocery stores, though they possess higher educational qualifications than their peers who were born in and partly educated in India.

#### Settlement in Christchurch

The twenty or so children of New Zealand birth who attended Linwood High School from the late 1950s onward gave some clues as to the residential pattern of Indians in Christchurch. As pointed out in the section about first generation migrants my informants described that their fathers lived in streets close to the city centre. Similarly, a pattern has evolved which suggests that Gujaratis during the 1960s resided in areas approximately two miles from the city centre. Census statistics revealed that full-blooded Indians (presumably a large majority of Gujaratis) have not moved to suburbs in the outer areas of Christchurch.<sup>14</sup> One reason for such a concentration in inner Christchurch must be to do with occupation particularly in 1945 and 1961 census. Indians lived in areas close to where their business was conducted. The 1966 figures illustrate an

14. See Table 5.

increasing number of Indians in existing inner suburbs of Christchurch,  
indicating a move towards stabilisation of the sex ratio.

TABLE 5

## Census - Race. Geographic Counties: Administrative Counties

(including Dependent Towns and County Towns)

Together with interior borough and independent town districts.

INDIANS							
CENSUS	1956		1961		1966		
	M.B.	F.B.	M.B.	F.B.	M.B.	F.B.	
Christchurch City							
City Central S.D.	M.	10	1		2	2	
	F.	2				4	
City West S.D.	M.	7		4		14	
	F.	1			1		
City East S.D.	M.	2		3		2	
	F.		1			1	
Northcote S.D.	M.	3	3		3		
	F.	1	1		2		
Papanui S.D.	M.	2	2		2		
	F.	2	1		2	2	
Strowan S.D.	M.		2		1	1	
	F.		1			3	
Merivale S.D.	M.			1	1		
	F.		1		4	3	
St. Albans S.D.	M.				3	2	
	F.	1		2			
Shirley S.D.	M.		2	1	3	1	
	F.	2	3		6		
Burwood S.D.	M.				4		
	F.				3	1	
Wainoni S.D.	M.				1	3	
	F.		1			3	
North Richmond S.D.	M.						
	F.						
Richmond S.D.	M.			5			
	F.		1	1			
Avonside S.D.	M.						
	F.				1	1	
Linwood S.D.	M.	17		11	1	23	
	F.	11	1	9		19	
North Linwood S.D.	M.						
	F.						
East Linwood S.D.	M.				1		
	F.						
Aranui S.D.	M.	1				2	
	F.	2				1	
Bromley S.D.	M.						
	F.						

Woolston East S.D.	M.			1	5	5
	F.					2
Woolston West S.D.	M.	6	1	2	5	2
	F.	8		3	3	
Opawa S.D.	M.					
	F.					
St. Martins S.D.	M.					
	F.					
Waltham S.D.	M.	2		4		6
	F.			1		4
Sydenham S.D.	M.	1	14	15		16
	F.	1	3	8		8
Addington S.D.	M.	2				4
	F.	5				1
Spreydon West S.D.	M.			1		
	F.					
Spreydon East S.D.	M.					
	F.					
Hoon Hay S.D.	M.					
	F.					
Somerfield S.D.	M.					1
	F.					
Beckenham S.D.	M.				1	
	F.				1	
New Brighton S.D.	M.				1	
	F.		3			
Mount Pleasant S.D.	M.					
	F.					
Sumner S.D.	M.					
	F.	1				
Paparua County	M.			1	2	
	F.					
Hornby	M.			1	1	1
	F.	2		2	2	2
Sockburn	M.			5	5	
	F.			4	5	
Remainder	M.			2		
	F.				1	
<u>Waimari Co.</u>						
Riccarton Borough	M.			3	1	2
	F.			4		1

Source: Census of New Zealand 1956-1966

F. = Female

M. = Male

M.B. = Mixed Blood

F.B. = Full Blood

## CHAPTER V

### LINKS

In this section I wish to look at links established by those people of Gujarati descent in Christchurch with Gujaratis in India and with those people of Indian descent in New Zealand. A brief survey of these links may give an indication of cohesion of Indians in Christchurch and other Indians - a cohesion which possibly inhibits contacts with their host society. A constant theme which one can trace through the history of Indian migration and its subsequent settlement is ambivalence. On the one hand, by perpetuating links with Indians, be they in India or elsewhere, general relations with the general public may be felt to be impaired. But if one looks at incentives offered by the New Zealand Central Indian Association in the form of inducements to Indian students gaining high marks in examinations and a cash prize award to a student, not necessarily Indian, at a New Zealand university, then there surely must seem to be an ambivalence. These inducements indicate the decision to make New Zealand a permanent home, unlike the early immigration undertaken by first generation migrants.

A wide variety of links has been built up. "Links" may be divided into two categories: formal and informal. The latter involved letterwriting to and from India and remittances to dependents in India. Informal contacts were carried out on an individual basis. At the same time formal contacts have also evolved over the years with many communities of Indian descent throughout New Zealand forming themselves into associations. These associations have been combined into a central body whose membership has been drawn from the various branch associations. Sometimes this central body has supported appeals of individuals, as in the case of an anti Asian feeling which broke out in South Auckland in 1926.

At the informal level contacts were maintained by migrants through frequent visits and letterwriting. Letterwriting was understandable particularly during the 1930s and 1940s. The majority of migrants had been educated in the Gujarati language while remittances were an important source of revenue for dependents of migrants.<sup>1</sup> Payments were so important that a resolution was passed at the annual conference of the New Zealand Indian Central Association which requested,

... the minister in charge to consider that every Indian in New Zealand may be allowed so much, sufficient enough to support his family every month.<sup>2</sup>

It should be remembered that at this period overseas funds were short in New Zealand. In addition, the resolution was passed at a time when war had just broken out. I did not ask my informants how much money they sent to India but they did agree that money was sent at regular intervals. Another way which allowed contact to be maintained with Indians was through frequent visits made to India. One second generation Indian migrant made a number of trips. Once was to marry. A second time he was accompanied by his wife and children. The last trip he made to India was to arrange family property before his death in New Zealand. Similarly, another second generation Indian made trips to India. He was approximately ten years younger than the migrant mentioned above. His first trip to India was for marriage while his second visit was general. His family and the son of one of his older brothers, also a resident of Christchurch,

1. V.H. Joshi, Economic and Social Change in a South Gujarat Village, Baroda, 1966. Although Joshi does not mention New Zealand as a place of emigration, he discusses the nature of remittances. Despite the fact that some families have been broken up into nuclear units in the village he studied, Hari, they have continued their contacts socially and economically with their larger family. See pp. 75-77.
2. N.Z.I.C.A. (Inc) Report of Annual Conference of the N.Z.I.C.A. 8-9 October 1939, (typescript), p. 2.

accompanied him. On his return to Christchurch the second generation migrant brought with him, his father. His father had first come to Christchurch during the pre 1920 period and had returned to India before the Second World War. These two examples indicate common reasons for trips to India by second generation Indian migrants. It was generally members of this group who went back to India for marriage.<sup>3</sup> Marriage to a Gujarati female was only natural during the 1940s, considering the fact that all but two of persons of Gujarati descent had returned to India before the Second World War. In later years as the children of the second generation grew up, there was the desire on the part of the older generation to show their children the country of the former's birth. Possibly a third stage may be added: that of the third generation, children of the second generation of migrants, going to India for marriage. This stage, however, cannot be applied to all children of India descent born in New Zealand. Marriages have taken place within New Zealand, with partners of both Indian or non-Indian descent. See Appendix.

Within New Zealand, there has been a tendency for contacts between people of Indian descent in New Zealand to continue. In the first place, descendents of the present population originated from a small part of Gujarat. McGee mentions a figure of 280 square miles in describing the original home of Indian migrants to New Zealand.<sup>4</sup> As far as Christchurch is concerned, my informants originated from a much smaller area.<sup>5</sup>

3. I do not wish to discuss the topic of marriage. It is a sensitive topic, beyond the scope of a brief essay such as this.

4. T.G. McGee, "the Indian Community in Wellington City. A Geographical contribution to the Study of Assimilation," Unpublished M.A. Geography thesis, University of Wellington, 1961, p. 27.

5. See map.

Such a close proximity meant contacts in India would take place. It was inevitable acquaintances would be renewed in the new society.

Secondly, the Gujarati language has continued to be used. This seems natural. Migration has been recent. The proportion of Indians total population has never been large.<sup>6</sup> On the other hand it has been large enough to generate contacts amongst Indians in New Zealand on both a formal and informal level.

Table 6

Census Year	Indians	Percent	Total Population
1956	3087	0.14%	2,174,062
1961	4179	0.17%	2,414,984
1966	6843	0.25%	2,676,919
1971	7807	0.27%	2,862,631

Source: New Zealand Official Year Book, 1973, 1977.

It was not unusual for visiting amongst Indians in Christchurch to take place in the way Palakshappa describes for the Waikato.<sup>7</sup> Another informal link is the screening of films from India. The import of these films was undertaken by the Central Indian Association who then delegated the task to the Auckland and Wellington local branches. Apart from the content of these films it would seem the films fulfilled a social function. It was immaterial that the films were made in Hindi,

6. See Table 6.

7. T.C. Palakshappa, "Indian Immigrants in Waikato (New Zealand): A Study in Dynamics of Institutions," Working Paper in the Department of Sociology, University of Waikato, Hamilton, 1973, p. 12. With the arrival of Ugandan families of Indian descent in 1973 their origins were not only Gujarat but also from other parts of India. In this essay I have not dealt with this latter group since they are of such recent origin.



a different language to Gujarati. The screening was an occasion for those of Gujarati and other Indian descent to meet their friends.

A variety of contacts have been retained within Christchurch and outside. Principal reasons for these contacts may be traced back to a common heritage. In this connection, the Christchurch Indian Community, whose members are largely of Gujarati origin, has run a Gujarati School from time to time to cater for the generations born in New Zealand. Whereas the classes have been continuously conducted in Wellington since 1950<sup>8</sup> the same can not be said of Christchurch. The fact that there have been four attempts, with intervals of some five to six years between them indicates the Christchurch Indian population has not stabilised to the degree that the Wellington Indian population has. Nonetheless all centres with permanent Indian populations of greater than one hundred have constructed or bought halls for the purposes of a community centre,<sup>9</sup> in which religious activities and classes were conducted. Christchurch's hall was opened in 1976. One function which has been regularly celebrated is the Indian Festival of lights, Diwali.

Similarly, formal links with the Indian heritage have been established within New Zealand. In the files of the Christchurch Indian Association, reports of conferences written in Gujarati were found.<sup>10</sup> It was only from the late 1940s that the reports and financial statements were printed in English. The reasons for the formation of a Central Body as well as the establishment of the Christchurch Association need to be discussed.

The Christchurch Indian Association was founded in 1936. It followed a nationwide trend. That is, by the mid 1920s, associations

8. Wellington Indian Association Inc. Golden Jubilee Booklet 1926-1976, Wellington, 1976.

9. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement. 17-18 April 1954, Palmerston North. Pukekohe bought its hall in 1954 and named it the "Nehru Hall". Auckland opened its hall 2 October 1955. Its name was the "Gandhi Hall". Wellington's hall, the "Bharat Bha an" was opened 5 April 1958.

10. See illustration on next page.

પૃષ્ઠ ૮-મું

ઠરાવ ૫

અખિલ ભૂં. હિંદી મંડળ નિર્ણય કરે છે કે : મંડળનું વાર્ષિક સંમેલન માળ્યા પછી મંડળનો હેવાલ હિસાબસાહિત બે માસમાં મોડામાં મોડો પ્રગટ થવો એવો. [કારોબારી]

ઠરાવ ૬ નવા વર્ષના સૂરાયેલા હોદ્દેદારોએ પોતાની જવાબદારી પવિત્ર કરી સમજી અદા કરવી. ખખનચી નાણાં-હિસાબથી અભિપ્રત રહી ખચછે તેમ ન થતાં નાણાં-હિસાબમાં તેમને સાથે રાખવો. [કારોબારી]

ઠરાવ ૭. હેવાલ બે માસમાં પ્રગટ કરવો એ પાંચમો ઠરાવ નિયમમાં રજુસ્થર કરાવવો. તથા પ્રમુખ, મુખ્યમંત્રી અને ખખનચીની સહીથી બેંકમાંથી પૈસા ઉપાડવા. [કારોબારી]

[નોંધ : અત્યાર સુધી સંમેલનનું કોઈ કાર્ય ગુજરાતીમાં જ સાલવું હતું. તે માટે શ્રી. ગુલબનસાંગે ચર્ચા ઉપાડતાં ત્યારપછીનું કોઈ કાર્ય હિંદીભાષામાં શરૂ થયું. જેમાં હિંદી બિલકુલ બોલી શકેતા નહીં, તેમના વ્યાખ્યાનનો સાર હિંદીમાં ભાષાંતર કરવામાં આવ્યો હતો.

જે : ઠરાવો સરખે સરખા બે શાખાઓ મારફતે આવ્યા હોય - તેવા ઠરાવો કારોબારીદાર રજુ કરાયા છે, ઉપરોક્ત ઠરાવ મૂકનાર જ્યાં જ્યાં કારોબારી છે ત્યાં એ અર્થ સમજવાનો છે. ] બપોરે બે વાગે સભા

ઠરાવ ૮ મો ક્રમા મંડળ નિર્ણય કરે છે કે : પૂ. કર્નતુરબા સમારક ફંડ નવેસરથી નહીં ઉધરાવતાં, મંડળ પાસે રાષ્ટ્રીય ફંડના અને બંગાળ ફંડના - રટોરવા-મંડળનાં નાણાં સહિત કુલ પૌં ૬૫૬-૧૩-૩ જમા થશે, તેમાંથી ૨૦૦ પૌંડ પૂ. કર્નતુરબા સમારક ફંડ માટે મોકલવા, તથા ૨૦૦ પૌંડ ગુજરાત રેલસંકટ નિવારણ સારે મોકલવા. બાકીનાં નાણાં હાલમાં મંડળ પાસે જમા રાખવા. ય. દરેક શાખાઓએ પોતાનાં મંડળમાં એકત્રિત કરેલાં રાષ્ટ્રીય રાહત-ફંડનાં નાણાં મધ્યસ્થ મંડળના મુખ્યમંત્રીને તાત્કાલિક મોકલી આપવાં

consisting of those persons of Indian descent were formed. The Wellington Indian Association, for example, was formed in 1925.<sup>11</sup> with Auckland Indians also forming their association around the same period.

The New Zealand Indian Association was founded in 1926. It was formed as has already been noted, largely in response to an anti-Asian feeling which had broken out in the South Auckland area. This feeling had the unstinted support of the White New Zealand League, vigorously endorsed by such papers as the Auckland Star. In a leading article it pointed out that speakers at the inaugural meeting of the White New Zealand League were concerned about.

... The increase of Hindus and Chinese in the district, the monopoly that they are establishing in the fruit and market garden industries, and the impossibility of white competition in view of their low standard of comfort and rate of wages...<sup>12</sup>

The view expressed by the Auckland Star can be interpreted as primarily economic, whereas the Franklin Times preferred a more ideological stance, drawing a comparison between Asian migrants and settlers of British descent. The latter eked out an existence in the frontier land of North America!

11. Wellington Indian Association Inc, op cit.

12. Auckland Star 23 January 1926, leading article. Cited in a file compiled by Charles Sedgewick, Sociology Department, University of Canterbury.

... like sturdy Englishmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries across the stormy Atlantic in their cockleshells to conquer the virgin fields of America; which later sent the descendents of these men on the long, long trek across a new continent, fighting each stage with hostile Red Indians .... Had they but a mere infusion of the spirit which animated the colonising people we might welcome them here in spite of their dark blood.

They come not as conquerors of untamed nature, but as hangers-on and parasites-like Aultolyeus, as snappers-up of unconsidered trifles.... It upsets all living standards and socially demoralises the existing population....<sup>13</sup>

In the light of these criticisms and others<sup>14</sup> members of the Indian community decided at Taumarunui in 1926 to form an association. This anti-Asian feeling may be regarded as the immediate reason for the formation of a central body. At a deeper level it could be said that the foundation of an association resulted from the fact that many Indians to New Zealand originated from a common area, "more than 90% of the Indians in New Zealand are Gujaratis."<sup>15</sup> Thus migration to New Zealand might well be described as "regional migration". It would seem that aspects of Indian culture and values could quite easily be transferred from districts in India to New Zealand. It was possible for groups of Indians to form themselves into sectional communities though not necessarily residing alongside one another.

1926 saw the Indian Central Association composed of three branches: Auckland, Wellington and Taumarunui. Taumarunui was later renamed the Country Section to encompass roughly the area of the Central North Island, north of Taranaki and just north of Rotorua. Christchurch joined the central body at the same time as Pukekohe and Bay of

13. Franklin Times 18 January 1926.

14. See J.V. Williams, "A Study of the Gujarati Community in New Zealand", Unpublished B.A. (Hons). extended essay, University of Otago, Dunedin, 1976, Chapter III pp. 57-88.

15. W.H. McLeod, "Punjabis in New Zealand", Newsletter of the New Zealand Asian Studies Society Incorporated, No. 4, December 1977, p. 14.

Plenty-Rotorua. The major reason Christchurch joined the central organisation was that it was advantageous not only to join a body whose members were of similar origins but also such a body could articulate collective grievances for the New Zealand Indian population as a whole.

Conference reports since the late 1940s may help to illustrate preoccupations of the Indian population after initial unity was sparked off by the efforts of the White New Zealand League. The central organisation's objects were generally moderate,

To conserve, promote and advance generally the interests and welfare and status of Indians resident in New Zealand.<sup>16</sup>

The fourth object deserves a little more attention in that it seems to take a good deal of conference time, judging by past conference reports. Thus,

To promote or oppose bills, legislatures (sic) or other measures or bylaws affecting the interests of the Indian community.<sup>17</sup>

This last object could be interpreted a defensive measure. At the 1939 conference, for example, a resolution was passed to the effect that conference delegates were dissatisfied with the way in which New Zealand Indians were restricted in their movements outside New Zealand. At that time, a registration certificate compelled Indians going abroad to return to New Zealand within four years if they intended to return. Therefore, resolution six:

.... that all Indians admitted lawfully into the Dominion should be entitled to return to (sic) any time after they depart from New Zealand for the (sic) Visit to India.<sup>18</sup>

16. N.Z.I.C.A. Constitution and Regulations, n.d, (typescript), pp. 1-2.

17. Ibid, p. 2.

18. N.Z.I.C.A. (Inc) 8 October 1939, Rotorua, (typescript), p. 3.

At that same conference a resolution was passed to ask the Minister of Customs to allow adopted sons, usually nephews, to enter New Zealand.<sup>19</sup> This resolution suggests that New Zealand was considered a place of opportunity for young people, especially males. It also says something about the joint family system in India. As mentioned in an earlier section, it was common for a family to be under the head of a senior male and his wife. It was not unusual for boys to come to New Zealand without their parents. Often their mothers arrived later. A letter from the Indian Ministry of External Affairs to the N.Z.I.C.A. dated 6 January 1950 shows, that central body was willing to take up the case of seven boys of Indian descent with the result that all seven were able to have their entry certificates into New Zealand extended.<sup>20</sup>

A precedent, however, was not created from these seven cases in the sense that the central body would take up all prospective immigrants, carte blanche as it were. One notable exception was the case of one gentleman. At the 1963 conference held at Pukekohe his case was heard. According to the conference report, he was refused a re-entry permit which meant he could not return to New Zealand from India. His case dragged on for a number of years. In that time the 1966 conference elected a deputation to meet the minister concerned. Two years later a permit was granted. The case of another individual highlights another aspect of the Indian Central Association. An application was received by the Association from a Gujarati. In his letter, the applicant asked for sponsorship from the Central Association. In return he was prepared to be a teacher for the community.

19. Ibid.

20. Unfortunately I could not find in English facts of the seven cases. All of them had a father or grandfather residing in New Zealand which probably accounts for the seven to remain.

He was refused. The refusal indicated that the Association was officially secular. The applicant was a Hindu. Since members of the Association were both Hindu and Sikh, there was little likelihood that a person of this type would be sponsored. Further, the Central Association was not prepared to take the initiative in aiding individuals to come to New Zealand. Various conferences, however, called for a provision in immigration legislation which would allow husbands from India of New Zealand Indian girls into New Zealand.<sup>21</sup> But the Central Association did not itself sponsor individuals, or, normally, send deputations to various government departments on behalf of individuals. The Central Association preferred its members to make individual approaches. Even by the 1950s assimilation did not appear to be looked on with approval by members of the Central Association. Thus, at an executive meeting of the Central Association,

.... the Indians will on no account inter marry (sic), those that are lucky enough to find young men here who are not related have married in New Zealand...could it be possible Sir, for you to give consent to the girls to come back to New Zealand with their husbands.<sup>22</sup>

A resolution echoing the plea to the Minister of Immigration was passed at the 1959 conference, "husbands of the New Zealand Indian girls should be permitted to enter New Zealand."<sup>23</sup>

With regard to marriage at that same conference in Auckland it was resolved that two individuals conduct marriage ceremonies of the Gujarati variety, thus indicating the feeling that marriage between Indians, both those Indians born in New Zealand and those Indians from elsewhere, would continue.

A further link which can be discerned was through appeals made from India from time to time. In 1940 a letter was received from the

21. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 28-29 March 1959, Auckland.

22. N.Z.I.C.A. to the Minister of Immigration, the Hon. J.A. Hanan, printed in the N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 31 March - 1 April 1956, Pukekohe.

23. op cit, 28-29 March 1959, Auckland.

overseas section of the Indian National Congress which asked for a breakdown of the number of Indians in New Zealand. As far as the Central Association's links with the National Movement in India, I did not come across specific financial contributions to the Indian National Congress.

Bearing in mind the reception some sections of the New Zealand Indian population received in parts of New Zealand during the 1920s, delegates to the 1949 conference resolved to send a sum of money to South Africa after an appeal was received from the Natal Indian Congress.<sup>24</sup> Apart from financial aid for flood relief in India, the most notable financial aid given on behalf of the Indian community by the N.Z.I.C.A. was during the early 1960s, a sum of money in the vicinity of £24,000 in three installments to the India Defence Fund. The sum was raised largely by house-to-house collection amongst Indians. It was in response to a worldwide appeal launched by the Indian Government in the light of border tensions with China. Despite the fact that the Indians who raised the sum desired to live in New Zealand a concern was expressed to contribute to the country of origin. Possibly the more immediate reason for contributing such an amount was that New Zealand Indians were known to have relatives in India including parents.

Financial aid granted to various Indian causes together with resolutions at conferences pleading for a more lenient government policy with respect to marriage suggests a very strong link with "things Indian". Further, in published conference reports rhetoric confirms this tendency. Thus, "During the year our Indian Trade

24. N.Z.I.C.A. President's Report presented to the Conference held 21 January 1951, Rotorua. However, on the advice of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand it was decided to drop the contribution since financial aid was being given for political purposes.



Commissioner, Mr Sambjal was appointed as State Secretary..."<sup>25</sup>

India was continually referred to as "our motherhland". Yet at the 1949 conference a decision was made to donate a small sum of money to Massey Agricultural College for those students (not necessarily Indian) to study for the degree of B. Agri. Sc. It is significant that the prize was named the "Mahatma Gandhi Prize". Gandhi was regarded by many New Zealand Indians of the first and second generations as the symbol of Indian independence. He led the famous Salt March in 1930 to Dandi, approximately ten miles west of Navsari. Nonetheless, in 1949, at the time of the debate over compulsory military training in New Zealand, the then President in his report appeared to be a little more accomodating towards New Zealand society as a whole,

This is our opportunity to prove that we are willing to play our part to defend this country of our adoption and...gain a military knowledge which may come (sic) useful in future to defend our motherland if ever we called upon to do so.<sup>26</sup>

These quotations imply the Indian community saw India first and foremost as the country of origin. It was to be defended as best as possible. Nevertheless, the portrayal of the Indian Community through the views of the Central Association ought to be a little balanced. In the rhetoric of conference reports New Zealand was a country to be proud of. A visit to India was made by the New Zealand Prime Minister and it was reported that,

We cannot pass unnoticed the visit to India of our Prime Minister the Right Honourable Walter Nash.<sup>27</sup>

25. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Report 16 April 1960, Pukekohe, (underlining mine).

26. op cit, N.Z.I.C.A. President's Report 1951.

27. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 5 April 1958, Wellington. (underlining mine).

More important, by the 1960s, delegates desired to distribute prizes to students of Indian descent who attained high marks in the School Certificate Examination.<sup>28</sup> It was a sure demonstration that children were encouraged to take full advantage of the New Zealand education system.

Although it was not possible to find the 1945 Annual Conference in English a photograph was found revealing that a Central Association Conference took place in Christchurch.<sup>29</sup> One notable incident which may be mentioned is that during the 1952 conference, held in Christchurch, Christchurch delegates pointed out a local hotel refused to serve Indians with liquor.<sup>30</sup> Conference delegates decided to take action by interviewing the manager of the hotel. However, subsequent correspondence to the mayor of Christchurch and the Canterbury Licensed Victuallers Association produced little joy for the licensee was claimed to be allowed to serve or refuse whom he chose. After receiving that reply the conference decided to drop the matter.<sup>31</sup> Possibly, the matter was dropped due to the fact that at the 1953 conference only two delegates were from Christchurch.

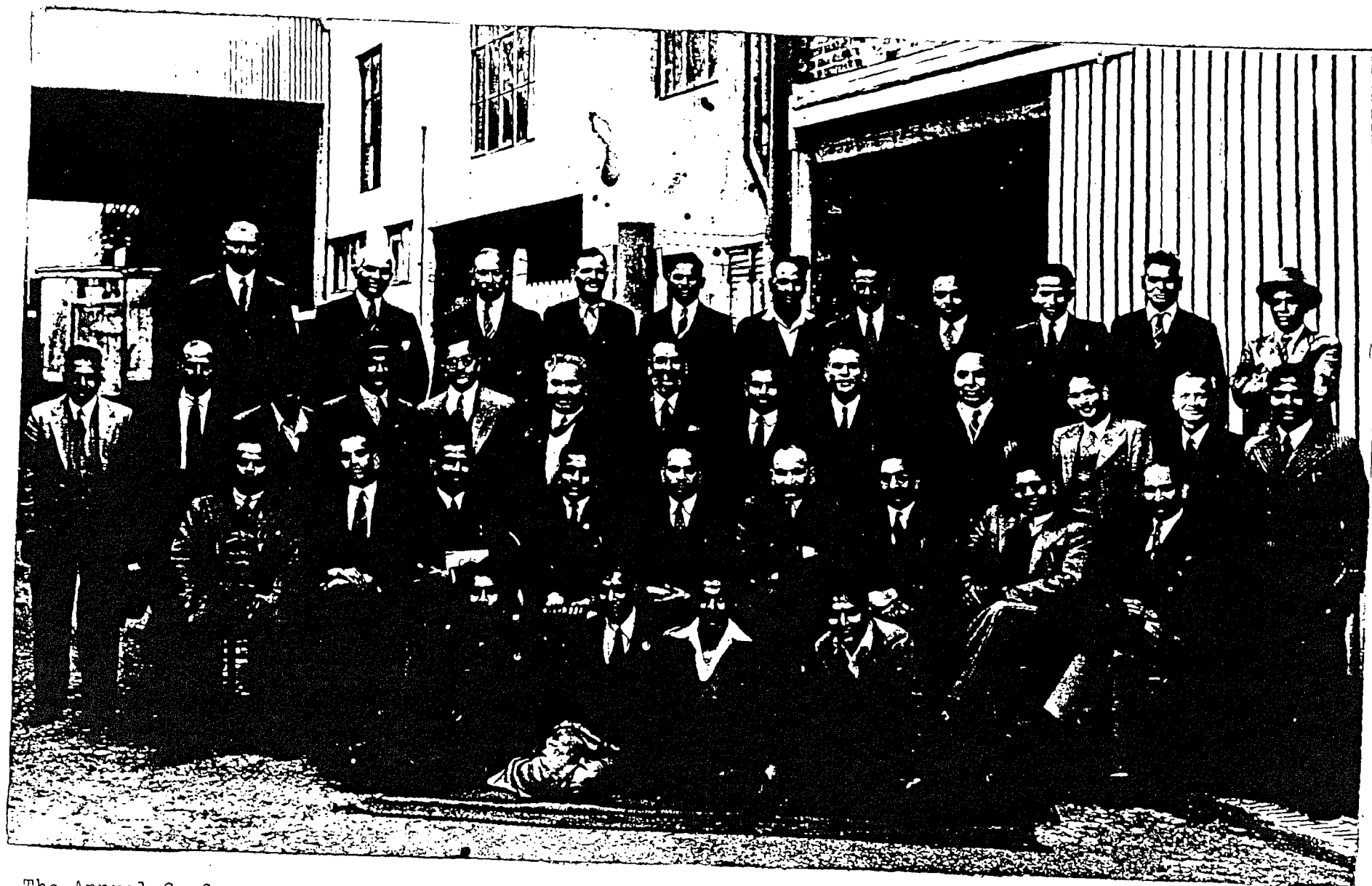
Although delegates from the Christchurch Gujarati Community have attended conferences they have not held executive positions such as president and secretary. This may conceivably suggest that no member of the community has leadership qualities; more important is

28. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 5 April 1969, Wellington.

29. See illustration next page.

30. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 12-13 April 1952, Christchurch.

31. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 4-5 April 1953, Auckland.



The Annual Conference of the Central Indian Association. Christchurch, January 1945.

the fact that the Christchurch community has never been large.

Not all of these conferences have been unanimous in decisions taken. Indeed, differences have been apparent amongst various branches. It is unnecessary here, however, to go over these matters.

To date only one cultural programme has been presented on a co-operative basis. That occasion took place in 1976 to celebrate the fiftieth year of the foundation of the Wellington Indian Association. Members of the Christchurch, Wellington and Pukekohe Associations performed.<sup>32</sup> They performed Gujarati peasant dances. One publication was attempted in 1972, the New Zealand Indian Chronicle. After less than four issues the enterprise failed. The failure could in part be attributed to apathy. The content of the magazines varied from subjects dealing with New Zealand immigration legislation to Indian cookery recipes and to events in India. It was significant that several letters and one editorial centred on the subject of New Zealand born children having to live two differing lifestyles.<sup>33</sup>

Whereas the Punjabi community has completed the building of a Guradwara (Sikh temple) in 1977,<sup>34</sup> no such Hindu temple has been built by such Hindu dominated communities as Wellington and Auckland. The Wellington community hall has been used for religious purposes in the form of readings from the Gita and discussions on religious matters. Religious festivals have also be celebrated there. One such festival has been Navaratri, the nine nights in the first, or bright

32. See photograph on next page.

33. See New Zealand Indian Chronicle Vol 1, No. 1, Wellington, 1972.

34. McLeod, op cit, p. 14:



A dandiya raas or Gujarat peasant dance performed at the Wellington Indian Association Golden Jubilee Concert, 17 April, 1976.

half of Ashvin, the last month in the lunar calendar.<sup>35</sup> Therefore it cannot be said that Hindu communities have not been involved in religious matters. But,

Hindu religious life is based on personal belief of a philosophical nature which need not find expression in worship at a temple.<sup>36</sup>

#### HOCKEY

During the past twenty years hockey has become a very popular sport amongst Indians in New Zealand. Indeed the Wellington and Auckland communities have had teams made up exclusively of Indians in the local men's senior club competition. There would be very few logical reasons for hockey being played by a largely New Zealand born population. Hockey, however, has now been played by what I have termed second generation migrants. Between 1926 and 1938 three hockey teams from India made tours to New Zealand.<sup>37</sup> No doubt persons of Indian descent in New Zealand were instilled with a sense of pride when they realised the skill displayed by their fellow countrymen at the sport. It would seem these tours were an incentive for Indians to play hockey in New Zealand. Although it is difficult to be certain about this, the second generation of migrants very probably encouraged their sons and nephews to play the sport.

35. According to D. Pocock's, Mind, Body and Wealth, Oxford, 1973, p. 79n. four calendars operate simultaneously in India: the Hindu, Muslim, Zoroastrian and the western secular. In the village, Pocock writes that the last named calendar determines business, government and educational activities. However, marriages, fasts and festivals are co-ordinated by the Hindu lunar calendar. Pocock's remarks apply to a rural area in North Gujarat. But his remarks could well be applied to Gujarati communities residing in New Zealand.

36. R. Desai, Indian Immigrants to Britain, London, 1963, p. 93.

37. C.V. Walter, "Indians, Pakistanis. Old Friends," Hockey Bully, March 1977, p. 3.

By the 1950s Auckland, Wellington, Waikato and Manawatu all fielded hockey teams made up of people of Indian descent. Later they were joined by Pukekohe, Bay of Plenty and Christchurch. In 1960 the New Zealand Indian Sports Association was formed.<sup>38</sup> It was made up of all these clubs and was charged with the administration of Indian sport in New Zealand. Hockey has been organised on a national scale which has meant annual tournaments have taken place since the 1960s. This Association appears to have worked closely with the New Zealand Indian Central Association since at the 1963 Central Conference the latter agreed to donate a trophy for hockey.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the New Zealand Indian Sports Association requested from the Central Association consent for incorporation under the Incorporated Societies Act of 1908. These interchanges indicate a cohesion amongst people of Indian descent.

It is significant that a well known company of fruit and vegetable auctioneers presented a shield to the New Zealand Indian Sports Association so that hockey matches could take place on a challenge basis between teams of Indians.

Hockey perhaps demonstrates best the degree of contact with the host society. Of course in ordinary life Indians have conducted their businesses, and attended school with non-Indians. On an organised basis, under the auspices of the New Zealand Indian Sports Association, New Zealand Indian hockey teams have been selected to play against provincial teams. In 1966 a match between a team of New Zealand Indians and Wellington's provincial side was arranged.<sup>40</sup>

38. Franklin Times 27 May 1975, p. 16.

39. N.Z.I.C.A. Report and Financial Statement 13 April 1963, Pukekohe. The trophy was named after a skilful Indian hockey player, Dhyan Chand, who toured New Zealand in the 1930s.

40. New Zealand Indian Sports Association Annual Report, 1967.

Unlike the Gujarati language which was spoken in India and has continued in New Zealand, hockey as a link amongst New Zealand Indians, does not fit the same category as a common language. The sport was adopted in New Zealand. It was not "imported" by Indian immigrants in the way the Gujarati language and customs were. Nevertheless, it has provided a cohesive link between New Zealand Indians in different parts of the country. The writer has observed, however, that hockey tournaments have been fiercely competitive so that tournaments could not be thought of as purely social events. If newspaper reports were to be taken as being accurate then high standards must have been attained by concentrated training.

Indian players from many parts of New Zealand produced some superb hockey of a style-seldom seen in Wellington...<sup>41</sup>

A number of players of Indian descent has achieved representative status in the New Zealand Universities cricket and hockey tours as well as representative selection at provincial and national level. It could well be argued that organisations such as the New Zealand Indian Sports Association and local Indian sports clubs have helped engender some form of confidence in young Indians. By the same token, the same could be said for annual conferences of the New Zealand Indian Central Association. It has allowed individual Indians to claim some sort of recognition which may not be possible in general society.

41. Evening Post 5 June 1967, Cited from the New Zealand Indian Sports Association Annual Report 1966-1967.



## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Ninety-nine percent of them live in communities closed, for all practical purposes, to "outsiders." They have their own Social and Sports clubs, to which others are not admitted, and speak their own language amongst themselves.<sup>1</sup>

This was one view expressed by a member of the general public regarding Indian Settlement in New Zealand. The observance of religious anniversaries by various members of the New Zealand Gujarati community as well as the continuation of teaching and speaking Gujarati has been disconcerting for some. On the one hand, this type of community involvement has been regarded as a form of apartheid. That view may be partially correct. Yet this type of group behaviour may also be interpreted as inevitable.

The history of the Christchurch Gujarati community has illustrated the factors responsible for social and sporting unity amongst that community. That is, what I have called the "second generation" of migrants was born in Gujarat and spent much of their childhood there. After completing their primary education in Gujarati some young males were sponsored to New Zealand by their fathers. On the whole, the younger generation found it difficult to continue an education which was western-orientated in Christchurch. Thus, many of the younger generation followed their fathers into the bottle collecting business.

A turning point was reached after the conclusion of the second World War. This period marked the decision made by second generation migrants to make New Zealand their permanent home. It also confirmed that the type of Indian migration to Christchurch would be "chain migration" - of the wives of the second generation and their Indian born children, if any. Thus the population of Indians in Christchurch was bolstered considerably by the arrival of dependents of the second

1. Christchurch Star 23 January 1979, Letter to the Editor.

generation. The majority of wives of the second generation had spent their childhood and adolescence in India. It was only natural that people originating from a small area of only two hundred square miles, (in the case of Christchurch the area was a good deal smaller), should speak a language, Gujarati, with which they had become familiar, in Christchurch. The main reason why sporting and other associations, formal or informal, developed on a New Zealand scale was that emigration from India had taken place on a regional basis. This regional type of migration was perpetuated greatly by the 1920 Immigration Restrictions Act. The major provision of the Act, concerning Indians, was that the entry of Indians would be granted only if prospective migrants were dependents of Indians already resident in New Zealand. Christchurch and indeed New Zealand provided examples of not only chain migration but also of regional migration.

Despite cohesive factors which helped to maintain a community spirit, in the Christchurch study it was possible to discern differences amongst and within generations. The generation of New Zealand born children appears to have branched out into diversified occupations. This seems reasonable since the younger group was educated in New Zealand. Between generations a distinction has been found. Those children who were, on the whole Indian born, did not achieve high qualifications as those children born in New Zealand.

It is difficult, on the basis of this study, to forecast the future of the Christchurch Indian Community. One suspects that economically it will flourish. What is not easy to predict is the degree of social and cultural cohesion amongst this community in future generations.

Of course forecasting the future is not the historian's task. It is to be hoped that this brief study has illuminated a little of the past.

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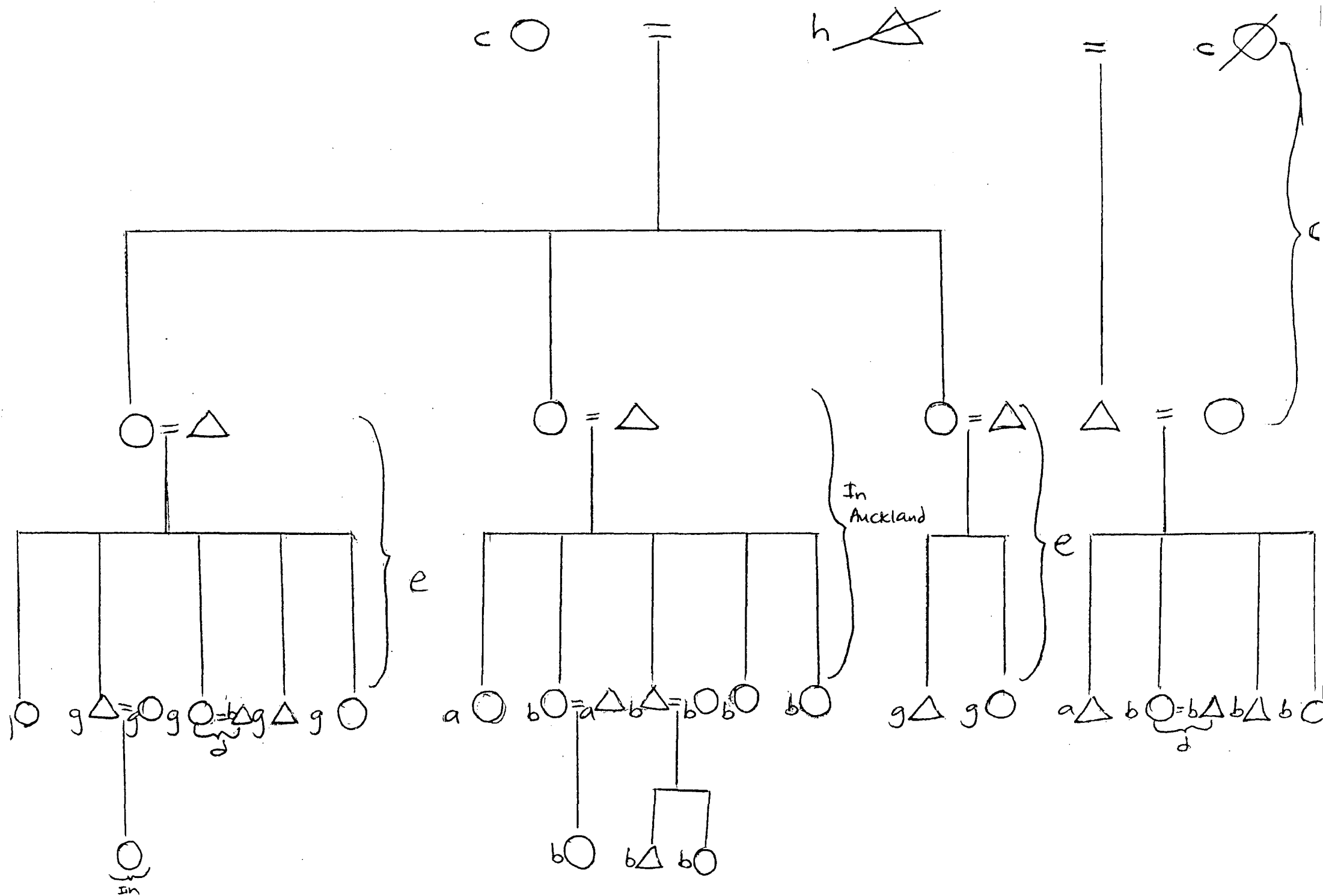
## APPENDIX

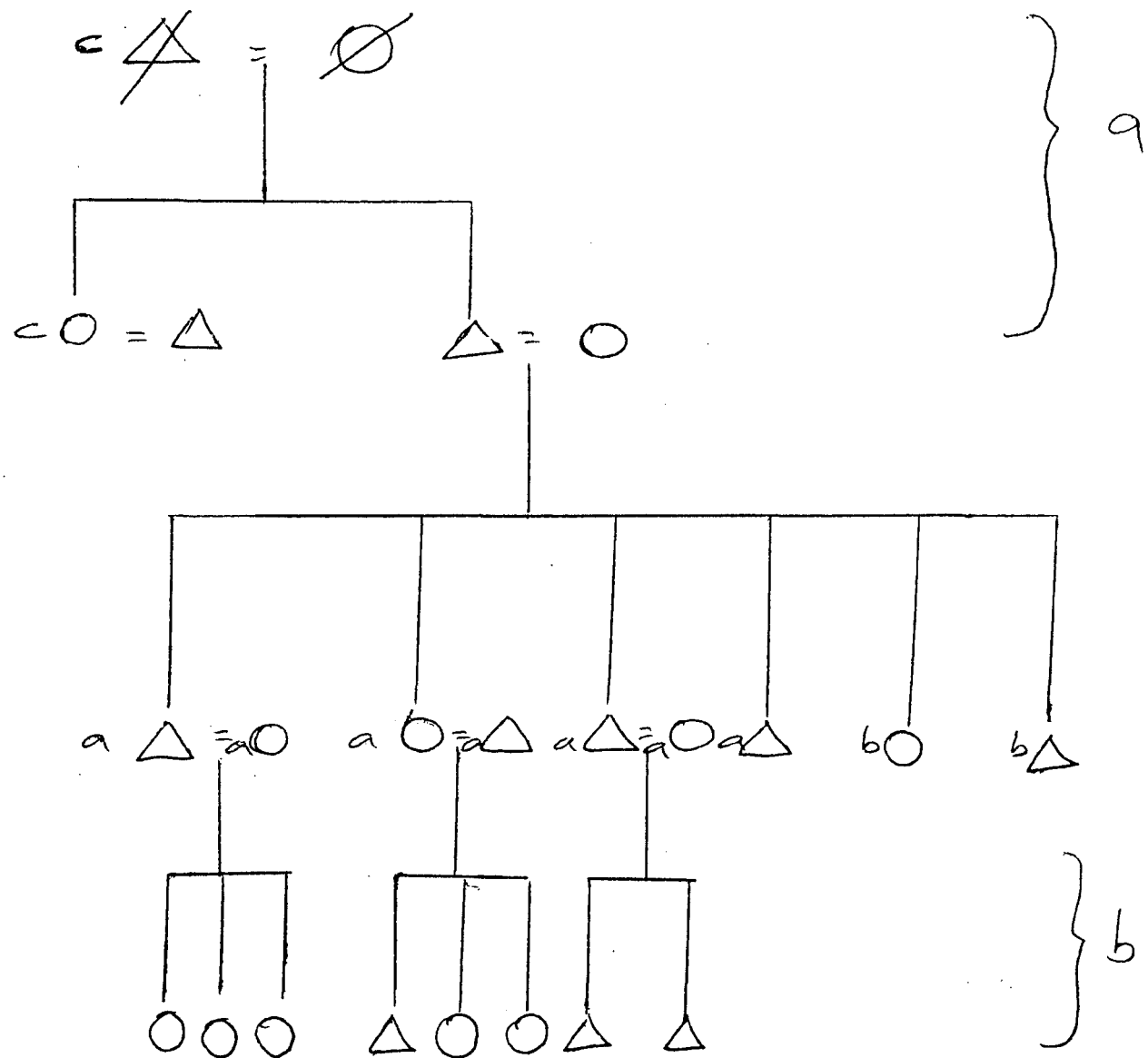
### FOUR SAMPLE LINEAGES

The following information was gathered during interviews with four members of the Indian community. These lineages help to illustrate a pattern of immigration which evolved during the 1920s. From these lineages it is possible to see that none of the wives of migrants whom I termed as first generation, came to Christchurch. In addition, it can be seen that some families of second generation migrants have been made up of not only children of Indian birth but also of New Zealand birth.

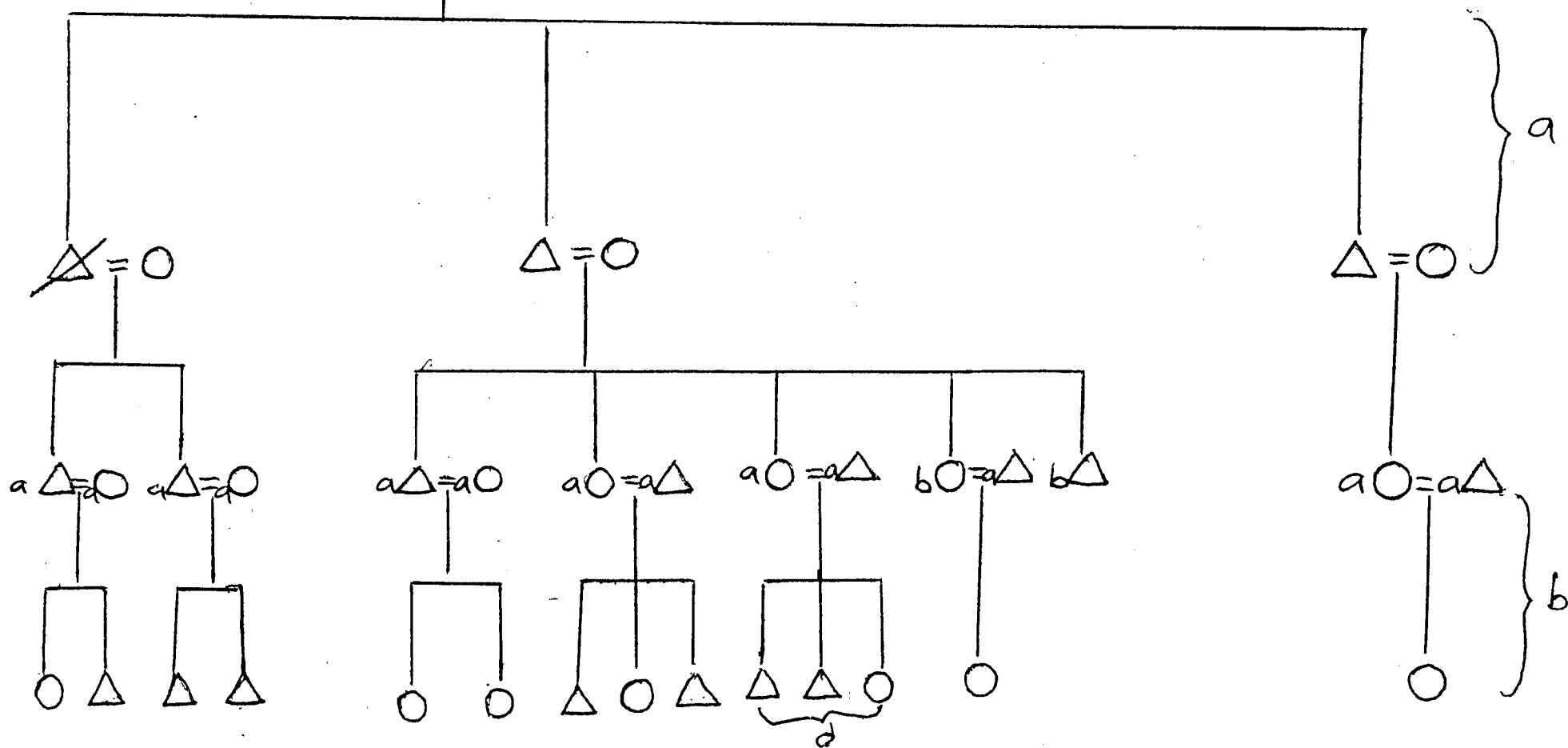
### KEY:

- female
- △ male
- = marriage
- Ø deceased
- a birth in India
- b birth in New Zealand
- c never in New Zealand
- d in Wellington
- e in England
- f in Wellington
- g birthplace not discerned
- h death in New Zealand





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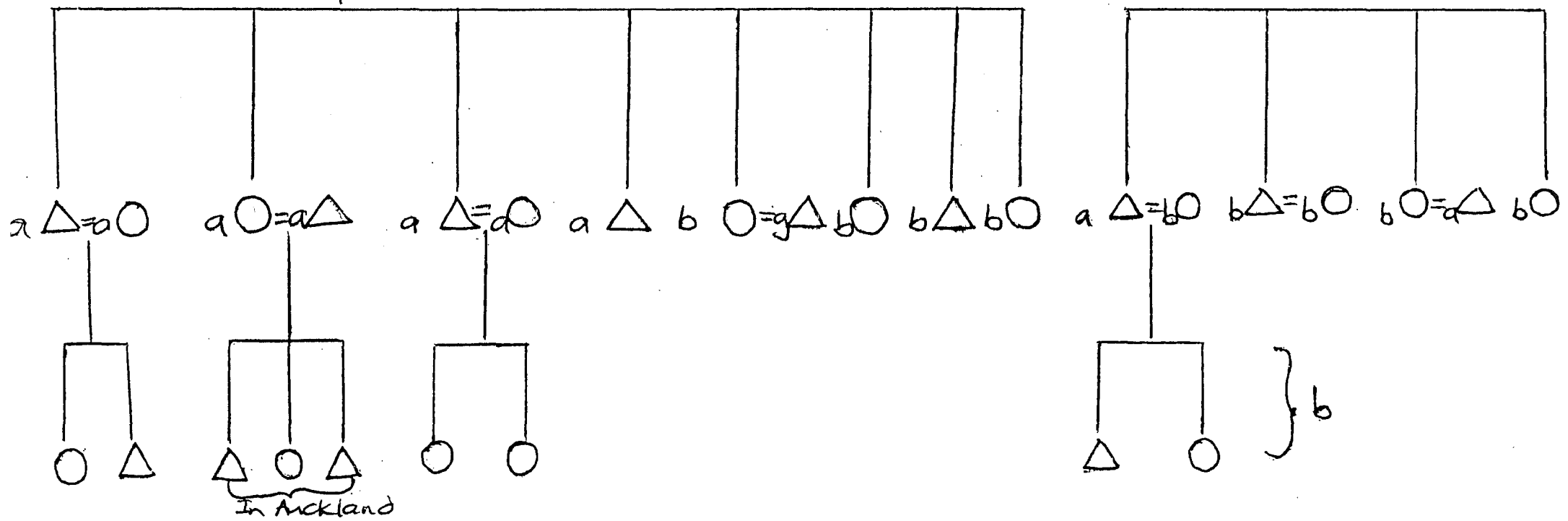


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